



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 07487194 2



10

11

12

13

14

15

16

Husband
NCW

7



Husband
N. 11. 11



HUSBAND HUNTING;

OR, THE

MOTHER AND DAUGHTERS.

A TALE OF FASHIONABLE LIFE.

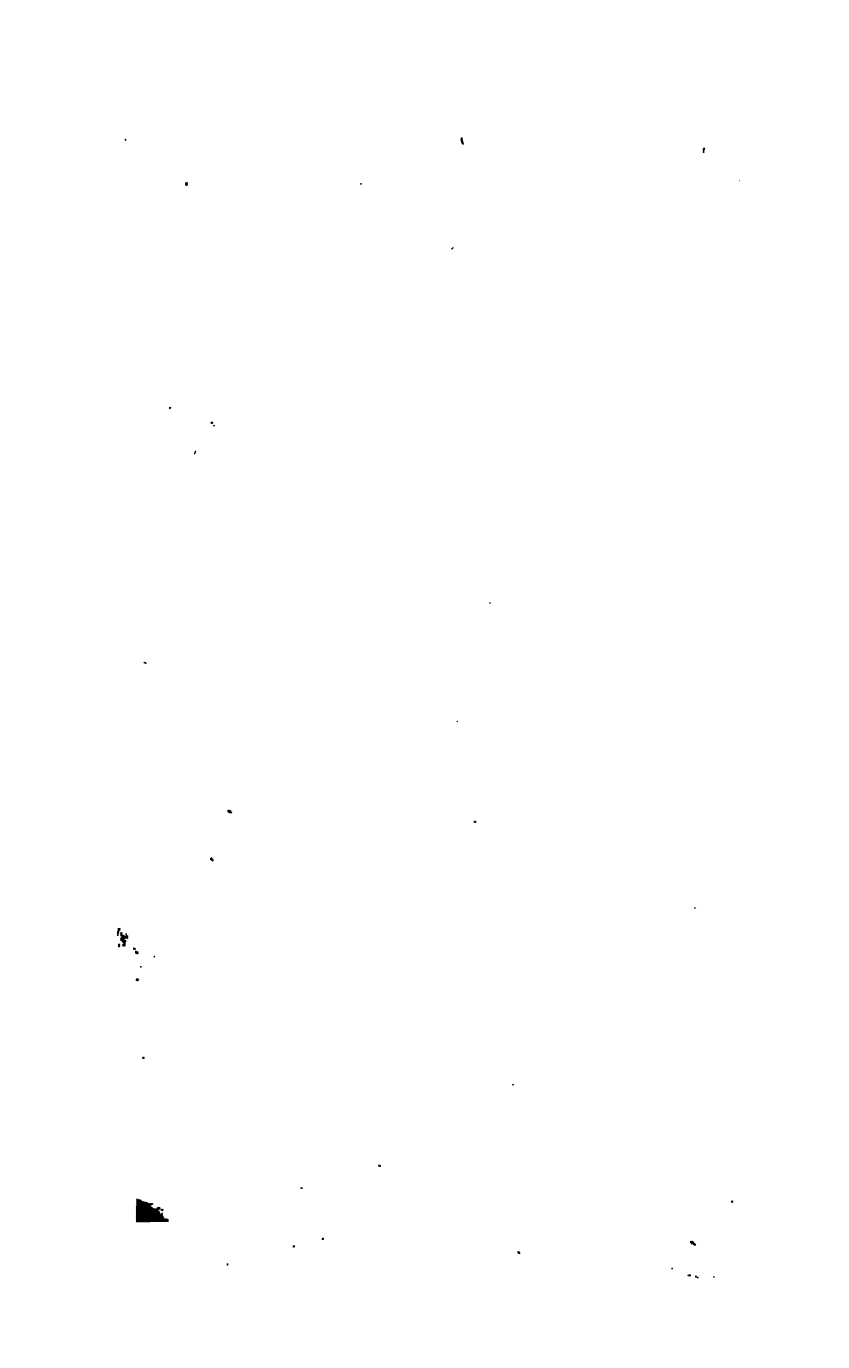
IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

BOSTON:

WELLS AND LILLY—COURT-STREET.

1825.



HUSBAND HUNTING;

OR, THE

MOTHER AND DAUGHTERS.

A TALE OF FASHIONABLE LIFE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

BOSTON:

WELLS AND LILLY—COURT-STREET.

1825.

PUBLIC LIBRARY
276706A
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R 1926

12

9.12.

77

PREFACE,

BY

S——L J——N, Esq.

THE age has passed away, when Novels delighted themselves with the picture of manners that never existed, and the narration of adventures that never could have been performed; with unnatural sentiment, and ponderous impossibility.

Time,—which has been charged with such ravage of external things, is not always a conspirator against human improvement; that which has covered the surface of the Pyramids with decay, has polished the fabric of the Novel, and we now see the gravest forms of history and of life reflected in

it with the elegance of poetic fancy, and the sharpness of individual satire.

In our Work we have been not insensible to this great improvement; and if we have suppressed well-known names, or thrown a veil over well-known countenances, we have yet drawn *from the life*. The two great sources of wisdom, personal knowledge and public fame, have not been forgotten and *titled beauty*, beset by family intrigues will find her virtues and sufferings in Catherine Greville; while *rival Duchesses* may be reproved by the heartless ambition and profitless artifice of Mrs. Courtney!

We now commit our volumes to the world; we shall not say, with indifference to their reception; for what author has not felt the buoyancy of hope, and the depression of fear; what literary bosom has not been rejoiced by anticipated panegyric, and appalled by prospective criticism?

But we must take the common chance of our species, and be content to purchase the

PREFACE.

honours of literature by the general penalties of fame.

Yet in the utmost severity of fate there is sometimes a compensation; and he who is criticised by all must be first read by many.

That Reviewers claim an exemption from this great law, has been strongly affirmed; but we must allow that it has been as strongly denied. "*Non nostrum est tantas componere lites.*" Perhaps truth lies between, and Reviewers read—the title.

But whatever opinion the world may pass upon our work, we have that within, which living statesmen and dying heroes have been often denied—our own perfect approbation!!!

When our volumes shall have reached after-ages, and shall make the learning of the wise and the delight of the gay; when pages of annotation shall be amassed upon a sentence, and solemn controversies piled upon

the simplicity of a surname, then shall be our triumph. Yet what shall it then avail us ; if we shall be where triumphs are heard no more !

S. J.

Bolt-court, London.

HUSBAND HUNTING;

OR,

THE MOTHER AND DAUGHTERS.

CHAPTER I.

I live with bread like you, feel want, taste grief,
Need friends.—*Shakspeare.*

"It grows late, your honour," said old Peter, the white-headed valet de chambre of the master of Halston-Hall, as he advanced to the bed-side. No answer was returned, but a low murmur evidently meant to express reluctance to be disturbed. To this Peter was accustomed, and he soon returned to the charge. "A fine rainy morning, your honour: the post has come in, and the newspaper is arrived, and on the breakfast table." The charm failed of its effect, and Peter played his last card. "There are visitors, your honour; a lady and her son." A voice, something between querulousness and anger, now uttered from within the bed—"Visitors!"

and why, in the name of all that's preposterous, did you not tell me that before, you old goose?" The rest sank into soliloquy. "A lady! and what can she have to do with me? some petition, some made-up story to extort money: I'll be sworn it's some baggage, marauding through the country, in tragic black, or with a child in one hand and a subscription list in the other. But I have my money for other purposes. Go, you inveterate old fool; turn her out, and tell her to look for dupes elsewhere. No, stay, I'll go and turn her out myself." The speaker now flung back the curtains, and was making an effort to rise, while Peter stood at a distance with customary awe, when a glance at the sky, now charged with heavy clouds, and full of the chill and dreary aspect of a fixed rainy day, repelled him. "Yet, for what should I rise?" he ejaculated rather than spoke. "To see the same sky I saw yesterday; to hear the same nonsense; to eat, drink, and doze the same; to be robbed by the same rogues; to feel life the same dreary, dull, disgusting thing, to the end of the chapter. Go, sir, send those people about their business, and tell them never to come here again until I am dead and buried; do you hear? Why does the fellow linger, bowing and grimacing like a monkey or a Frenchman?" "Don't speak so loud, your honour," said

Peter, with his hand on the door, and in a tone hushed to a whisper, "or you will be heard in the next room—Mrs. Vaughan is there."

A flash of surprise lightened across his master's withered features; he was evidently smote by strong and mingled recollections. "Mrs. Vaughan! my brother's widow! Confound your stammering; why did you not awake me when she came: order a fire—breakfast. Go and tell her that I will see her immediately." "I dare say, sir," said Peter, "the poor lady is glad enough to find herself under your honour's roof at last. She has been travelling all night in the mail, and a cold and rough night it has been. She has been inquiring for your health, and hoping that your honour stands out this weather well, and asking how you look, and a whole heap of other kind things."

"Indeed! well make her my compliments. Twenty years ago, Peter, she was the fairest girl in the county: a bright-eyed, blooming, light-hearted creature." The rest was nearly to himself, and broken by the process of putting on his various habiliments. "Cold and hungry, no doubt, and thinking me in her soul a heartless, worthless, kindless, miserable old man. But she was a fool: to marry my brother, a fellow with nothing to depend upon but his commission! They did

not want for advice, for I told them that they were a pair of fools. So they married, in my very teeth, and never came near me after. They took me for a hard-natured, bitter, money-saving dog; and what they thought me, perhaps, after all, they made me."

During this conference the new visitor Mrs. Vaughan, awaited the result, in no very enviable state of mind. With her eyes fixed on her son, she revolved the perplexing thoughts that press upon an affectionate and delicate mind, making its first application to dubious generosity. The tear stood in her eye as she thought of the separation, which must be the consequence even of success in her appeal to the old man in behalf of his nephew; and as the increased movement in the next room told her that the interview was still nearer at hand, she felt her spirit divide within her, and, in the language of holy weariness of the world and its conflicts, wished for the "wings of a dove, that she might fly away, and be at rest."

Her son amused himself in gazing round the curiosities and oddities of the room. Halston-Hall was a venerable mansion; and it was, besides, the mansion of an old bachelor. It was, of course, filled with furniture, combining the formidable taste of ancestry with the quaint and rustic absurdities and equipments of an old country gentleman, bound u

in resolute celibacy; massive chairs, of the fashion of Queen Anne's time; a ponderous marble table, under a mirror, in which

"He of Gath might have seen his whole bulk,"

and surrounded with a frame, crowded with bird, beast, and fruitage, carved in sullen oak: a mighty bookcase piled with black letter, the Game Laws, Treatises on Magistracy, and County Chronicles; walls hung with family portraits, now all alike, and all covered with the brown antiquity of dust and smoke; prints of celebrated racers, that had long run their last course; a mantel-piece, loaded with noseless busts, the importation of a travelled ancestor; the hereditary snuff-boxes of the whole line; and, suspended above all, the fishing-rod, the net, and the fowling-piece, with which the present lord of the mansion had once ruled over lake and forest. At length the door opened. Mrs. Vaughan could not recognize in the figure before her the man she had known twenty years before. The vigorous frame and full feature were gone, and she saw nothing but the feebleness and exhaustion of premature old age. Her countenance probably expressed this, for he suddenly flung off Peter, and advancing towards her with an affected firmness of step, took her hand. "You don't

know me madam, I perceive," said he ; " no wonder, no wonder.—Time, time, madam, and illness, and solitude, though all that, perhaps, was not to be laid to my charge ; and the hatred and contempt for a wretched world of rogues and fools, madam, might have broken down a stronger man. But you," and he gazed intently on her fine expression—"Time has passed lightly over you ; yet sorrow has been here ;" and he drew his pale thin finger across her forehead. "What, tears ? ah, I suppose you have seen hard days with that fool of a husband." The blood mounted into Mrs. Vaughan's cheek. "Fool ! sir." "Well, well, say no more about it," he murmured, as he started away and paced the room. "Why, in the name of common sense, did you not tell me your situation long ago ? I inquired for you when the first burst of that silly quarrel was over : but you were not to be heard of. So you had rather bury yourself in some obscure corner of the earth, where you might as well have been dead at once, than have come, and have dealt fairly with me ; openly, honestly, told me that you were alone, that you were not above recollecting your husband's brother ; and it might be," as he thrust out his shrivelled hand, "that you would not have found me the man of stone and iron that you thought me. And,

now, there's the mischief of it!—you have come too late. I am hampered already; bound neck and heels by a whole muster-roll of relations, nephews, nieces: yes, they remembered me well; there was no fear that they would forget the old man, at least till the breath was out of his body.'

"I entreat you, sir, to believe," said Mrs. Vaughan, in a voice overpowered with emotion, "that I was incapable of forgetting you; that I lamented the unhappy difference of our families, which I fear was sustained by unfortunate and unfriendly reports; and that I forbore to trouble you, only from respect for your quiet, and the wish of one who never ceased to have a brother's affection for you."

"Come, dry your eyes, and sit down, lady—Mrs. Vaughan—sister. Let the past be past. Introduce me to your boy. Bless my soul! wonderfully like: the living image of my brother. Well, sir, and what do you intend to be, a bishop, a judge, or a general?" Francis blushed and bowed. "That," said his mother, "must be left to his own decision. I am in great doubt."

"Well, madam, there is no doubt that we must do something with the fellow. He is too old for bird-nesting and rambling through the country, and too young to be trusted into that hive of knavery and absurdity, the world, alone. So we must send him to col-

Jege: there, at least, he will learn to chop logic, drink port, and put a grave face on a confounded deal of nonsense. I have been there myself, madam, though but little of the leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees has stuck to me."

"I have been thinking of mortgaging my pension," said the anxious mother.

"No, madam, you shall not mortgage so much as your pin-cushion. We'll set about the matter without delay;" and his faded eyes lighted up with a new feeling of benevolence. "Bound as my hands are by promises to my sister's family, and they will want nothing for asking for it, I can yet launch the lad into life. No thanks, madam," and he gently put down her hands, which she had raised almost in an attitude of prayer: "I did as much for Philip Courtney, my nephew: the boys shall start fair. But," turning to Francis, who had listened with a delight that forbid all thanks but those of his burning cheeks and brightened eyes,— "you have never been in London: well, young man, London you must see first. There was a monstrous spirit of jeering in Oxford in my time, and I am inclined to think the spirit has not much declined. So you must not be laughed at as altogether rustic; and so—I have it. I'll give you a line to Philip Courtney; a fellow that knows

the town well, and, perhaps, more too than is good of it; but, no matter, he will keep you out of mischief; and this day shall the letter be despatched. It is a day of reconciliation, and we will make it memorable."

Day after day passed, and it was about three weeks before the old man could prevail upon himself to part with his nephew. At length a letter was written to Philip Courtney, enclosing another from Mrs. Vaughan to his mother, with whom she had kept up, for some years, a reluctant and intermitting correspondence.

CHAPTER II.

'Tis with our judgments, as our watches, none
Go just alike, but each believes his own.—*Pope.*

Scandal's the sweet'ner of a female feast.—*Young.*

Mrs. COURTNEY had been handsome, and a belle of her day; opulent; and had fully assisted an extravagant husband in getting rid of his estate; and arrogant by nature and habit, a quality which had faithfully remained behind when the estate and the beauty had fairly flown. In all points a woman of

the world, in the world she was determined to remain, and to figure as long as she was able; and for those purposes, was content to exert that severe ingenuity by which many of the luckless and fashionable strive to keep up appearances. She exhibited an establishment, *imposing* in all of the word; gave occasional routs, implicitly announced, with the keenest circumspectuality, in the newspapers; went to days, with a diligent loyalty worthy the purest times; curtsied low to a countess, twice as low to a duchess, and honoured a king, at least as faithfully as she did her husband to the other half of the commandment. Her respect was to be presumed the mere result of respect for subordination; for no "Englishman" could observe the degrees of inequality with a more scrupulously distinguished distinction. The whole race of the vulgar or uneducated felt their doom at once. It was said that the blood and rental of the whole circle could be estimated, at any distance, would give a view of Mrs. Courtney's egotism. Her Christian virtues were as public as those of a woman of fashion could be. She appeared, with undeviating regularity, in the charming and crimson-cushioned pew of Dr. Dandy's delightful chapel; there, safe and select from the obtrusive vulgar, gazed, in serene piety,

Doctor's auburn wig and diamond ring; re-echoed the aspirations of lips, touched by the very spirit of politeness; and, with her feet on the fender of her stove, suffered wisdom, in its most delicate essence, to distil into her bosom. Mrs. Courtney had a son, of whom more is to be told in this history, and daughters, who may be suffered to speak for themselves. Those, altogether, were now her great business; and to scatter a family handsomely through the Court Calendar is still found among the very severest of the regular tasks of fashionable maternity.

Mrs. Courtney was not wanting to herself in this emergency. She consulted the Baronetage and Peerage lists with fresh activity; gave double the number of routs; rode with her fair daughters in the park, at the congenial hour for picking up an escort; had the first intelligence of the arrival of a Yorkshire baronet, or a wandering Irish peer, invited him to her mansion, and lunched him into incipient love; condescended to introduce the wealthy uninitiated into fashion; and chaperoned the awkwardness of heiresses without a friend.

The four fair daughters of this accomplished lady were lingering over a late breakfast, and languidly discussing the costumes and complexions of the last night's rout, when their mother walked into the room. Her

step was hurried, and her countenance ruffled to a degree that would have surprised an observer of the infinite serenity, varied only by the most gracious of smiles, that expanded over it for the six long hours of the night before. She brought an open letter in her hand. She stood for a moment, with her eyes fixed upon the group, but obviously too much engrossed by her personal meditations, to have any very distinct knowledge that they were gazing at the changes which ran so rapidly over her countenance, "in pale ire, envy, and despair."

However, she at length perceived them, and smoothing her features at once, and in the most suppressed tone of vexation, she inquired whether any of the ladies had received letters that morning. "Not one," was the general reply. "Then, my dearest loves, I have received one, which agitates me most painfully," sighed Mrs. Courtney: "not for my own sake; for what have I to fear or feel in this world? but for you, my loves, for your interests, for your happiness, for your honourable establishment in life, my sweet girls." The honied strain was customary, and her sweet girls were quite satisfied how far it was sincere. But the matter was now evidently something beyond the usual well-bred calamities, and they solicited to know the nature of this formidable missive. She glanced over it, and her eye caught and

den fire. "There," said she, flinging the letter on the table; "read there. I wish from my soul that that woman, that Mrs. Vaughan, were in Newfoundland, or anywhere else ten times farther out of the world. She has made her way to that old fool at Halston-Hall, in full weepers and weeds, no doubt; has told him a long story with her sentimental tongue; and has absolutely won over the old miser, ay, melted his heart, heaven help us! *his* heart, by the whole artillery of sobs and sighs—'drawn iron tears down Pluto's cheek.' Nay, she has had the effrontery to prevail on him to provide for her overgrown boy at college, out of *my* money. For mine it was already, by his will, and mine it would have been this hour, if the old fool had not been so obstinate in living. I should not wonder if he would change his will: at all events here is a new danger, and, let me tell you, a most formidable one."

The intelligence was certainly perplexing; but youthful belles are not easily put out of countenance, and, after a moment, Clementina, her eldest daughter, and by habit taking the lead in the family council, observed, "that the matter *was* vexatious, and that the vexation was not at all lightened by its having been the work of imprudence in a quarter, for which she had, of course, the highest consideration." The sisters smiled; but Mrs.

Courtney had heard this preface before, and no smile sat upon her cheek. "Let me hear no more of this folly, child," uttered the matron, in a tone which it took all her serenity to keep within bounds. "Read the letter for yourself, and see, if you like it, how near all your prospects are to ruin, ay, nothing less than total ruin."

Clementina was a blonde and a belle of the first distinction. She had, upon due occasion, the most roseate of all complexions, and the most captivating of all dovelike eyes above it; but now the cheek was flushed fiery red, and the dovelike eyes flamed. "Madam," said Clementina, rising from her seat in angry majesty, "I will tell you by whom, if we are undone, that undoing has been effected;—it was by the vanity, the blindness, the idle artifice"—Here, however, the remainder of the party interposed; and Clementina was calmed down to resuming her chair. "Yet," said Seraphina, the sentimentalist of the family, "my dear sister, as to my mamma's corresponding now and then with Mrs. Vaughan, there was, after all, no great harm in the affair. It was useful to know what she was about; and even now, but for this correspondence, she would have been undermining us with the old miser, without our knowing a syllable on the subject. She certainly writes a very pretty pathetic

letter, edged still with tragic black, and sealed with a very elegant antique.

Julia, the youngest and most beautiful of the family, now observed, by way of palliation, "that Mrs. Vaughan might be forgiven, as her efforts were not for herself; that, even if she were to come to town, she could not enter into competition with the young and lovely." Clementina and Seraphina made an involuntary bow; "and that she could not, of course, marry the old gentleman of Halston-Hall." "Nay, for that matter," whispered Martha, the homeliest of the household, and probably for that reason the least dulcet in her style, "it is next to impossible that she can marry any one. There is no hope, alas! for *widows* of the sober age of thirty and upwards." A glance from her mother's eye showed that the arrow had reached its mark; but Mrs. Courtney was not accustomed to sit long under exposure. "Martha, my love," said she, in her most silvery tone, "happy are they whom Nature has secured from the troubles of either, wife or widow.—But here," and she flung the letter to a dependant niece, sitting in one of the windows; "here, Catherine, since none of those young ladies, in their infinite wisdom, will read this letter, let me hear it coolly, if the present company have no peculiar objection." She threw herself back on the fau-

teuil with a bitter smile, covered her eye with her hand, and listened with a flushing cheek, and a lip quivering with variety of passion.

The letter was, after all, a simple one : it mentioned that " the necessity of educating her son Francis, now rapidly growing into the time when he must choose a profession had overcome her dread of applying to the old man of Halston-Hall, the brother of her late husband. That she had unexpectedly found him more than civil, nay, generous that Francis was to be furnished with the means of going through the University, and that, as he must first visit London to make his arrangements, she would feel grateful for his cousin Philip Courtney's guiding his inexperience through the wonders and peril of the great city." " And here comes Philip to answer for himself," said Martha, as the door opened ; and young Courtney, a showy youth, dressed in the extreme of fashion, entered, with an exclamation, " What, all assembled, the whole Divan ! Well, so much the better ;—I have news for you ; but I see you have had your despatch too,"—and he took the letter peevishly from Catherine's hand " Was there ever any thing so unlucky. That incorrigible woman—that feeble, flexible, childish uncle of our's ! I must give up my horses, be seen no more in the clubs, and

get rid of my curricule and all that,—if this fit of ridiculous generosity lasts. Why, I have post obits to the amount of—” He checked himself in the full career of confession. “No, as to the estate into which those people will worm themselves, I don’t care; but it is confoundedly hard, at my time of life, to be compelled to dangle after heiresses, and chain oneself down to matrimony.” “Does your letter mention the woman’s son,” inquired Mrs. Courtney. “No—yes,”—said Philip, crushing it between his hands. “*That* I am determined not to do; I’ll be bear-leader to no one’s booby from the West or from the East. I’ll not make myself ridiculous to the whole world by teaching him his paces!—’pon my life, I should not be surprised to find myself followed by every acquaintance I have on earth, with their shillings a-piece for the show I had the happiness to exhibit to the admiring multitude.”—A thought sprang up in his mother’s prolific brain. “No rashness, sir,” said she, “no boyish imprudence. Come here, Philip.”—She took him by the arm, and leading him to a vacant window, communicated her design in a voice too low to be heard by the sisters; and interrupted only by Philip’s sudden “Ha!—capital—it must do—first of politicians.” Those exclamations, however, at last became so illustrative, that Mrs. Courtney, with her finger on her lip, led him from the room.

CHAPTER III.

Misers are not unuseful members of the community ; they act like dams to rivers, hold up the stream that ~~else~~ would run to waste, and make deep water where there would be shallows.—*The Jew*.

He had the wit which I can well observe
To-day in our young lords ; but they may jest
Till their own scorn return to them unnoted,
Ere they can hide their levity in honour.
All's well that ends well.

MR. VAUGHAN was stigmatized by the world, at least, the little world to which he was known, as a miser. Whether or not he deserved the appellation we will not at this moment determine. Certain it was, that his establishment was by no means proportioned to his fortune ; but one plain carriage, when it was well known that he could have as easily maintained three—servants as few as it was possible to dispense with—a table never sumptuously spread:—all were against him. He mingled but little in society, and his charity was bestowed with a cautious and sparing hand. It was possible that his retired life might be the most congenial to his taste,—that he might avoid society from a dislike of it,—that he might be well aware of the truth, that whatever gratification he might have in gazing at two or three splendid

equipages, he could not possibly make use of more than one at a time,—that the smaller his household, the less was his anxiety,—and lastly, that a long life of experience might have taught him the necessity of guarding against the impositions practicable on a solitary man. But where conduct is liable to two constructions, the world generally bends the balance to the worse, and the little word “miser,” was so simple a solution that it was used without ceremony; yet, there was one person, at least, who was far from condemning Mr. Vaughan’s system of economy, and that was his nephew, Philip Courtney. It was true that Mr. Vaughan had never made any direct promise to his nephew, but somehow or other it had become a generally-received opinion that he was to be the old man’s heir. He was always a privileged guest;—he was the only relative who, for many years, had set foot beneath his roof. His professional pursuits and other engagements did not permit him to pay frequent visits to Halston-Hall. Thus he came often enough to remind the old man of his existence, but not often enough to weary him; and then he displayed such an abundance of the virtues during his stay,—was so abhorrent of the extravagance of fashionable life,—was so abstemious and so pastoral in all his tastes, nay, even slumbered so opportunely during his

uncle's evening slumber, that his excellencies were irresistible. Thus having once established himself in favour, he thought the coast clear before him. The unfortunate Vaughans, from the long variance which had subsisted between the families, were as nothing in the way of such claims. Courtney was one of a numerous family. Splendid marriages for her four daughters, and his uncle's fortune for her son, were his mother's views; and Philip was too well aware of the advantages of money, and had too many ways of spending it, to have any intention of frustrating her expectation; still, he wished that some more decided step should be taken. He could never learn that any will had been actually made. The old man was capricious,—was far advanced in life,—some artful dependant might gain his ear;—he might die suddenly. In his absence, the fear of being superseded haunted him occasionally; but no very serious alarm had taken possession of his mind, till the unexpected intelligence of the arrival and consequent reconciliation of the Vaughans seemed to call upon him to reconnoitre the frontier position of the enemy, and exert his finesse, of which he had his share, to prevent their acquiring undue influence. He prepared himself accordingly to answer his uncle's letter in person.

"It is time," said Mr. Vaughan, one morn-

ing, after his brother's widow had been just discussing the propriety of her return home, "that we should receive an answer to our letters, and when they arrive you will be able to make your arrangements. Since the idea first entered my head, I have been anxious that the cousins should be better acquainted. The young are seldom fit guides for the young; but Philip is an exception to the rule. He unites the prudence of age with the gaiety and good temper of youth,—a rare combination let me tell you, Mrs. Vaughan, and one that cannot be too much valued in these degenerate days. Some of my kind friends would persuade me that he is an extravagant coxcomb, but I never could find it out myself; and as they are obliging enough to set me down as a miser, you may judge how much reason I have to believe them. But," starting up suddenly and walking to the window, "if my eyes don't strangely deceive me, there is Philip Courtney himself walking up the avenue. It is he; yet I don't know what should surprise me either: it's just like his good-nature which never suffers him to do things by halves." The old man paused, for his nephew's voice was just then heard at the door. "Well, Sarah," said Philip to the old housekeeper, with that air of condescension which he so well knew how to adopt, "how has all gone on with you

since I was here last? uncle well, I hope. I suppose you are quite gay since my cousin's arrival?"—Then in a low voice, he added, "have they been here long?" "Almost three weeks," said Sarah, in a tone of discontent. Philip started back with unaffected surprise. "Almost three weeks, and I not hear of it till last Monday—the Devil!" Courtney paced the room furiously, but he soon recovered himself with admirable presence of mind.

"Rather fatiguing to the old gentleman,—must put him out of the way a little, I should think?" said he, pausing. "Oh dear, no, your honour; my master seems quite an altered man, ever since Mrs. Vaughan has been here,—has sat up twice, a quarter of an hour beyond his usual time,—invited the vicar and his lady to dinner,—has been down into the cellar himself for some of his oldest wine, some that your honour never drank of but once,—and moreover, the poor old coach horses that have led such an easy life so many years, have been ordered out every day on Mrs. Vaughan's account." "Alarming symptoms these," muttered Courtney. "Well, well," suppressing his chagrin with some difficulty and impatience, "it must be a pleasant change for you all." "It's a change no doubt, but one not at all to my mind, Sir," replied the housekeeper, who

had been too long in the administration to give up her rank quietly.—“They have been here now three weeks, as I was saying, and a great deal of trouble they have been to us all;—new ways have been brought in, and old servants forgotten.” “Well, Sarah,” said Philip, smiling, “and I too must have your good offices; mention my name to my uncle now and then, when I leave this, merely to remind him of my regard,—you understand me, and you shall have no complaint to make of me,” slipping a well-timed *douceur* into his ally’s hand. Brushing hastily by, lest he should encounter a similar interruption in the form of some other soliciting domestic, he made his way to the drawing-room, and introduced himself to his relatives. Without any dangerous or even explicit allusion to the late event, he delicately, and with much apparent sincerity, congratulated Mrs. Vaughan upon meeting her in his uncle’s house; won the old man’s heart by his rapid discovery of some valuable additions to his collection;—then reverted to the leading topics of the time, astonished Francis by his universal knowledge, caricatured with ludicrous fidelity—a task for which he was very well qualified—some of the reigning follies;—was familiar with the last Court news; and, in short, charmed the whole party by his fund of anecdote. “You give

so animated a picture of society in London, said Francis, "that I long to judge the correctness of the portrait by my own experience. When shall we set off?" "Ever you please, boy," said old Vagravely; "but take my advice, and be not too eager in your pursuit after pleasure. I think I may trust him under your guidance, Philip; but recollect—I have formed high hopes of you both, and wish not to be heedlessly disappointed them, for a serious reason to repent his imprudence." "Be under no apprehension, my dear uncle," answered Courtney; "Francis and I am persuaded, will soon be sworn friends. I shall just show him enough of London to make him return with fresh interest to literature and green fields,—to countenance, and rational enjoyments. In a week I shall have led him from one end of London to the other, and introduced him to every place and person worth seeing. Then let him retire to his studies, and labour to bring forth what his talents must make him, and his duty to his profession." "Sensibly spoken, Philip," observed his uncle, "act up to your principles yourself, and you have every chance of going smoothly through the world. Then proceeding to inquire concerning the prospects, Philip, with a sudden air of objection, observed, "that the law was

up-hill profession for a man of small fortune;" but added, "that he expected shortly to be called to the bar, and had no doubt, that by a long course of intense application, close confinement, and rigid economy, he might almost hope to succeed." "Yet, you don't look much like one, whose health and spirits have been injured by intense labour," said Francis. "Forgive me, my dear cousin, if I cannot fancy you in the light of a grave student—a pale recluse;—you, who seem so much better calculated to mingle in the gay world. I can picture Coke and Blackstone all set to flight by the thunder of a fashionable knocker, or the rattle of a curricule wheel." "Ah, I see you don't know me yet," said Courtney; "you must come to town and judge for yourself.—You should see me as I always am, immersed in papers and parchments;—piles that would frighten an inexperienced eye,—declaiming to the bare walls of my study, at least with all the zeal, if I cannot boast the eloquence, of a Demosthenes,—with spiders for auditors,—half a dozen huge folios set up as witnesses, and as many chairs arranged for the jury. Then, with my mimic court about me, I thunder away, forgetful of every thing around, till sometimes, in the heat of the argument, I put the honourable court into a little disorder." "It's well it is but a mimic court,"

said his uncle, "if your enthusiasm is of such a dangerous nature. And pray how many bottles, &c., and relics of the last night's feast do you upset at the same time;—I suppose you have your moments of relaxation after days of so much toil?" "Ah, my dear Sir," said Courtney, "I see you have yet to learn that a young man who expects to rise to any eminence at the bar, must resist every temptation to excess. One step in the road to dissipation, and he is undone for ever.—That's my maxim. For one whose prospects depend solely upon his own exertions, there is but one track to pursue. It may take years to reach the point of your ambition, but the goal will be won at last." "You offer but few temptations to follow your example," said Francis, thoughtlessly. "I could not endure to sit for years looking over tedious parchments in the air of a smoky city. A soldier's life for me. Instead of dragging on the dull routine which you have been describing, let me carve my own way to fortune and fame. I am for taking wing like a bird, and enjoying equal liberty.—I am for basking beneath a foreign sun, with the world all before me, free to choose." "This is the choice, and these are the arguments of a boy, Francis," said Mrs. Vaughan, who had watched the progress of the discussion in silent anxiety.

touching the youth upon the shoulder :—" a little experience, or even a little reflection, may change your sentiments." " Ay," said the old man, " how little those giddy boys think of the reality of nights in the open air;—the chance of capture or death,—unhealthy climates, scanty provisions, and the hundred other military miseries. There are two sides of the medal, and once embarked in the profession, you would be compelled to see both." Mrs. Vaughan's eyes overflowed—he forbore to press the subject; and taking Philip by the arm they left the room. " I like my cousin vastly," said Francis, gazing after them, " he is so candid, so much at his ease, so sincere, it is impossible to help liking him." " I too," said Mrs. Vaughan, " am agreeably disappointed. His mother is a woman whom I never liked.—Her cold language and haughty manners repelled all affection on my part, and perhaps prejudiced me against her whole family. Philip has certainly treated us with deference and politeness. He has, at least, the merit of having escaped the contagion of her influence; and if he be as amiable as he appears to be, one could scarcely feel justified in wishing to interfere with his claims." " If, my dear mother," cried Francis impatiently, " why will you always damp my spirits with an if?—Why must we always live in a world of

suspicion? How long has this distrust been a source of alienation in our family?—You doubted Mr. Vaughan was generous,—and if he could be persuaded,—and if he knew how to forgive;—and did I not encourage you to hope,—and has the hope disappointed you?—And will you not believe me, when I tell you that you will find Courtney's heart as good as his manners are engaging?"—"Ah, Francis, Francis," sighed his mother "may you meet with more friends than have done."

Philip continued to make himself so agreeable to all parties during his short stay, that Mrs. Vaughan's prejudice against him was greatly diminished; and when her son exultingly remarked the change, she felt unwilling to damp his spirits by further opposition. Thus she heard the day fixed for his departure without remonstrance; yet with feelings more acute than she was willing to acknowledge. Young Vaughan's feelings were less disguised. He looked up to his parent with an excess of filial devotion. "It was for her that he wished to toil, for her he was anxious to be prosperous,—was only to be the means of increasing her indulgence that he could bring himself to leave her." This was his glowing and enthusiastic declaration; but his mother at once doubted and believed.

Many a painful memory rushed into Mrs. Vaughan's mind, and added double bitterness to the parting hour.—Francis was unsuspecting, and might be deceived.—He was impetuous, and might be misled.—His affections were strong, and they might be unworthily bestowed.—“I will offer no advice, and intimidate you by no predictions, my dear boy,” she said, “convinced as I am that your own heart will be the best guide. Let not the force of example persuade you against your better judgment; bearing in mind that the world is habitually a place of hazard;—that the mother whom you leave behind is alone;—and that should she be disappointed in you, she has no other hope on this side of the grave.

CHAPTER IV.

What numbers here through vain ambition strive
To seem the most transported things alive;
As if by joy desert was understood.
And all the fortunate were wise and good.—*Young.*

It was a wet and gloomy morning when young Vaughan commenced his journey.

The first day passed on tediously.—Conney was less conversible than usual. He even appeared thoughtful and out of spirits, but the next day the sun burst forth with fresh brilliancy, and as they approached London, Philip's animation appeared to turn.—“Welcome,” he exclaimed, extending his arms in a rhapsody, as the giant dome of St. Paul's broke gradually upon their vision.—“welcome, thou inspiring sight—welcome the dear delights of a London existence now to exchange my uncle's muddy port for sparkling champagne. Farewell long lectures on prudence,—the fearful sighs of three-score and upwards,—and the awful warnings of the easy-chair. Thank heaven too, I am once more out of the reach of the worthy rector's endless drone.—Glorious change; balls, operas, routs, fêtes, theatres.” “Why here's a metamorphosis,” said Francis, throwing himself back in the chaise in laughter. “Can I believe my senses.—In what new character are you going to appear?” “Does the transformation startle you? My dear fellow, it's affected merely by the change of atmosphere. Hitherto you have seen only the chrysalis, now you behold the butterfly,” said Conney; “Why, a man of fashion is lost, completely out of his element in the country dead—actually torpid—deaf—dumb—blind.”

Here is my sphere of action,—now I begin to breathe once more. But you look grave, displeased: eh? Is fashion then in your eyes such a very shocking thing?"

"By no means," replied Francis, "yours is the season of enjoyment, and I am too young to set up for a philosopher. All I disapprove of is, if I may venture to be candid,"—"Oh, deliver your sentiments freely, I entreat—Well then, all you disapprove of is—" "The little deception which you have practised towards my uncle. Why not appear before him in your true colours; why affect a character?" "Because I tell you, my dear fellow, my uncle is the most precise personage in existence. In dress, manners, and opinion, he would make me as antique as himself; and whilst with him, it is but fair to indulge his whim. I don't deny that I have expectations from him; but I feel at the same time, that for every expression of natural vivacity, he would cut off an acre. Take my advice and follow my example. I don't envy you your good fortune in having gained the old man's good graces so suddenly. He's as rich as Croesus, and fair game for us both. But I must have your promise, that if you live with me, and live as I do, you'll not take advantage of my confidence and good fellowship, run the same race of pleasure, and when you're tired of it sneak

down into the country to betray my interests." "Impossible, such treachery is not in my nature," said Vaughan, somewhat indignantly. "Then your hand upon the bargain," said Courtney, regaining his good-humour; "you are still the good fellow I took you for,—that awful frown rather alarmed me,—but all's well again."

It was nearly ten at night when the travellers reached Mrs. Courtney's door. The glare of lights, the rattle of carriages, and the incessant peal of the knocker, announced a gay assemblage within. "We are in high luck," said Courtney, "this will save you from the necessity of a formal introduction, than which I know nothing more detestable." The spacious hall was nearly filled with a profusion of hot-house plants;—the intervening space was occupied with what the lady of the mansion deemed absolutely essential to the eclat of her party;—an almost equal number of the lounging attendants of the guests above. "At home to-night, I suppose," said Courtney, carelessly, to a servant. "No, Sir, merely a select conversazione," said the liveried coxcomb, affecting, as nearly as possible, the tone and manner, as well as the *degagé* air of his master. All that Vaughan saw increased his surprise.—He had always understood that Mrs. Courtney had an anxious eye to his uncle's estate,

and that the whole family were dependent on this expectation. Yet could a woman, able to live in such a style, have any anxiety on the score of fortune? Her avarice must be of a most insatiable nature;—yet this looked not like avarice. If such were her expenditure, what must be her income? The obvious fact is, that Vaughan was a novice in London.

The conversazione was select and classic, and comprised not above a hundred and fifty of the most approved dilettanti! The tables were strewn with portfolios, vases à l'antique, a Venus,

“When unadorned adorned the most,”

a genuine bust of Plato, and a splendid proof impression of David's *Enlèvement des Sabines*, captivating to the eye of beauty and connoisseurship. But the apartments were not large; and, between the burning odours, the glare of the candelabra, and the perpetual movement of the crowd, Vaughan was utterly bewildered. He stood for a moment in perplexity, till Philip returned, leading a stately and rather reluctant figure. “My Mother,” said Courtney. Francis made his lowest bow. “Oh, Mr. Francis Vaughan, I presume?” said the lady. “Pray how long have you been in town?—Fine weather in the country?—But I see my Lord just come,”

and she turned away to a fashionable-looking man who was warring his way through the crowd. Francis was overwhelmed; her coldness, haughty air, and nonchalance, at once surprised and offended him, and he was about to leave the room, when his cousin seized him. "Come, my pupil, that's my mother's way; not the most captivating one to a lover of the melting mood I confess;—but here, I have a true Pastora for you, a sentimentalist of the softest colour—my resistless sister, Seraphina. Beware of your heart."

Seraphina was sitting at a harp, in the very attitude of fascination. One ungloved arm gently reposed upon the strings, which it now and then swept with a fairy touch, producing a whispered harmony to the tone of a voice subdued to the lowest murmurs of music. Her eyes were large, languishing, and of celestial blue; and those she alternately cast down upon a half-opened morocco volume, and raised up to heaven with the air of a Sappho. Her reverie was broke by "Seraphina, my dear, our relative, Vaughan—Quite thunderstruck by the sight of human beings; for compassion's sake take him under your patronage, and introduce him to"—"Ah, brother," sighed Seraphina,

"Those fair creatures of the element,
That in the colours of the rainbow live,
And play i'the plighted clouds."

"Just the thing for him," said Courtney, "for he seems altogether in the clouds already." The fair Seraphina's eyes had discovered that Vaughan was not altogether the repulsive rustic that the family circle had voted him, and she made room for him on the sofa beside her. Vaughan expressed a wish to hear the harp. "Excuse me, Mr. Vaughan," was the reply, "I do not affect to be a mistress of the instrument; I merely touch it as an assistance to the feeblest voice in the world. In short, the little I know of this 'treasure of sweet sounds,' is the result of a strange passion of mine for all that is harmonious." Vaughan implored. She bent gently over the harp, threw down her eyes in the divinest attitude of meditation, and began. Her voice was sweet, and highly cultivated; and Vaughan was charmed, and listening intently, when he was startled by "Capital! very superb indeed;—the Tenth Muse, by every string of Apollo's lyre!" Seraphina stopped, and Vaughan sprang from his seat with defiance on his brow, which turned into astonishment, as the pale and languid speaker, an utter stranger to him, quietly fixed himself in the vacated seat.—"Poh," said Courtney, coming up and catching Francis by the arm;—"don't you know Flatter?—Oh, I had forgot your verdant education. Take no notice of him; when

he has talked all his fine things out to Seraphina he will quietly retire." Vaughan resisted. "Come, come," said his cousin, "we must have no *fracas*. Flatter is the very best fellow within the Bills of Mortality. Why, he's essential to more Dukes and Duchesses, and to something higher still, than any man about town." "Impudent, intolerable," muttered Vaughan. "Yes, both, and yet neither," replied Courtney. "Habit has made them second nature. They are dovetailed into his character, until they give it all its variety. The truth is, society cannot dispense with him; his business is to put every man, woman, and child, on the best terms with themselves. Conceive the importance of such a tongue, when the whole world of fashion have such eternal reason to be discontented with themselves. Let me introduce you. As you are to be an Oxonian, he will congratulate you, at once, upon your talents, your learning, and your certainty of the Bishop's Bench, or of the Wool-sack, which you please." "This to a man's face?" said Vaughan. "Undoubtedly," was the answer. "His good things are not to be wasted on the desert air. I can assure you, that for the absent he has quite another style. But the fact is, that just now he is a particular favourite of Mrs. Courtney, and if you wish to be popular here"—Flatter had

risen from beside the fair Seraphina, and had touched Courtney on the shoulder, who turned to speak to him. Vaughan was obviously the object of inquiry, and to his astonishment he heard himself named as Captain Vaughan. "Eh—absolutely—a militaire—showy figure." "Yes," said Courtney. "but not fond of being talked to on professional subjects; so cut the Peninsula, and all that, if you intend to affect his feelings." In another moment Vaughan was honoured by a bow, into which Flatter had thrown his whole captivation. "My best friend, Courtney," said the man of smiles, "who is always doing kindnesses to all the world, has promised to do me an honour of which I have been long ambitious." "Eh! hang it, I was near forgetting," said Courtney.—"Mr. Flatter, Captain Vaughan." He pressed Vaughan's foot, who, however, between surprise and the oddity of his new acquaintance, made no attempt to speak. "Capt. Vaughan, a relative of this charming family, Courtney tells me.—No circumstance could be more fortunate for a gallant soldier returning from his toils," said Flatter. "Oh, vastly lucky fellow Vaughan is in every thing.—The world all before him.—All couleur de rose," said Courtney; "Mars, Venus, and all that sort of affair. I will enlist some time or other, when time or life hangs heavy

on my hands. Faith, even already, but for that villainous gunpowder, I would myself have been a soldier." Vaughan laughed "For heaven's sake, Philip, no more bantering." Courtney suddenly turned away to plunge into deep conversation with a dark featured wily-looking foreigner, who had just entered. "There he goes," said Flatter "one of the finest fellows in the circuit of May-Fair; but for—" "For what?" inquired Vaughan—"For that ill-countenanced scoundrel that has now got hold of him. There Sir, see how that fellow, Italian, or Frenchman, or Jew, but black-leg, whatever else he may be, grasps him in his clutches. There they go together; and before twelve to-night—" Vaughan looked with unfeigned astonishment at the change in Flatter's gesture and countenance. His feeble and lounging figure had suddenly grown upright, and his languid and sallow visage now deepened and quivered with fierce emotion. "That fellow is a public evil, a preyer on the follies of the inexperienced;—a plunderer of every man that accidentally associates with him;—a human wolf;—or, all combined in one, a professed gambler. But I will be revenged deeply, desperately revenged." He suddenly recollected himself; his vehemence had drawn the eyes of the loungers upon him and he stopped. Vaughan felt interested in

the situation of his cousin ; and pointing to a card-table, they sat down. Flatter took up the cards, but his recollections were not yet allayed, and he flung them down again with something little short of an execration. "A mad world, my masters," soliloquized Vaughan, looking on him as he deliberately tore card after card. "Yes, Sir," said Flatter, "a mad world ; and let me tell you a bad world too. Deception, trickery, and false play in every soul that tenants every body above the peasant ; and he is honest only because he is a beast of burden, and falls asleep under his load. You are a young man, Sir, and have yet to learn what a peep behind the curtain of the haut-ton alone can teach. See that young fellow, all moustaches and monkery, with a face as free from care as it is free from any trait of understanding, honour, or manliness ;—see him heaping his heavy attentions on that ancient dame, who receives them with such boundless gratitude. That fellow is absolutely ruined, not worth a beggarly denier ; living in the rules of the King's Bench, the only *rules* he will ever live in." A bitter smile at the point quivered over his cheek. "And the lady ?" said Vaughan. "The lady, Sir, has been *only* twenty years the wife of a man who has lavished on her all that almost immeasurable wealth could procure. She is the mother of

a large family; and yet within these three days she will elope with that broken profligate."

Vaughan shrank from the picture, and turned to another group that were lounging over a portfolio. "Ay, there," said Flatter "you see tastes of another kind. There an old slave of excess is teaching the young idea how to shoot, and beguiling that pretty delicate, and opulent young simpleton into giving her beeves and acres to his generosity. In one month from this minute, she will be living on the bounty of her relations, and he be flourishing away on the Continent, in scorn of debt and dun, with his chère amie the wife of that respectable-looking peer with whom he is, ay, on my soul, at this moment shaking hands as if they were a pair of brothers."

"Yet," observed Vaughan, "not at all doubting your knowledge, can Mrs. Courtney be acquainted with all this?" "With every tittle," said Flatter.—"Then how can she admit them to her parties?" "Pho," replied the Cicerone, "how can she exclude them? Would you have her shut up her house, like a theatre, for mere want of an audience? Would you have her go to war with the whole polite world? You may select your pointers, or your merino sheep, or your prize pigs, but who the deuce that gives

roust can select her company? You must take the crows as black as Nature made them. The first necessity is to fill your ranks; and if you can't get your troops of the regulation size, why, what can you do but recruit from the army of reserve? No, not of *reserve*," said he with a smile; "of that quality they are guiltless, to do them justice." Vaughan was amused, but still more repelled by the unrelaxing acrimony of Flatter, who had now fairly abandoned all his pretensions to sycophancy. "There, at least," said he, pointing to a showy personage of mature age, with a star, sitting by a mature woman who had evidently been extremely handsome, and with whom he conversed with a grave yet intimate interest—"there is something to console the eye for those ill-assorted connexions. That nobleman and his lady have the true look of matrimonial confidence and decorum. They have gone apart evidently to avoid the frivolities round them." "Yes," said Flatter, "you are a physiognomist, and can perceive matrimony in both their faces. They are married." "Their name"—said Vaughan. "Not exactly the same now," replied Flatter, "though it was so once. They, however, have sympathized in all their doings since. They both ran away from each other;—they both sued for a divorce;—they both married persons whom they both habitually turned to

ridicule, and of whom they both are now beyond all telling; and both profess, at moment, something as ardent and absolute a passion for each other; the gentleman declaring the lady to be the most charming woman in England, and the lady declaring the gentleman to be the most irresistible son on earth. They visit each other with graceful punctuality, worthy of the times when knights wore armour, and women were divinities. At the opera, the lady is beautifully adorned by the gentleman's attentions; and at parties, as you see, they are the evening cooing on the same perch, as the doves of turtles; quite a rebuke to the lightness of the boys and girls round us, and fully serving of their name, the 'divine divorce' or the 'separable inseparables.' "

CHAPTER V.

A habitation giddy and unsure
Hath he that buildeth on the vulgar heart.

Shakespeare.

When people of superior fortune, whom Providence has enabled to bestow obligations, claim a right, from the favour they confer, to tyrannize over the hopes and fears of a mind in distress, they exercise a cruelty more barbarous than any in the whole history of human nature.

Know your own mind.

CATHERINE GREVILLE was the daughter of the late Mr. Courtney's eldest sister, who had married an officer in the Indian army, reputed to be a man of some consideration and fortune. Colonel Greville, on the loss of his wife, had returned to England, principally on account of his daughter, the only child she had left behind her, then but seven years of age; on whose delicate constitution the effects of the climate were already visible. It was his intention, at this time, to have retired from the service, and lived for his child alone;—but Catherine, however engaging and amusing, was too young for a companion, and could not make up to him for the society and occupations he had lost. His income was large, but from his habits,

not sufficient for his expenditure. He argued himself into a belief that it was but justice to his daughter, to endeavour to reach the height of his profession; in short, the restlessness of an Indian campaigner, and the ambition of a gallant spirit, all led him to regret a life of inactivity, and confiding his daughter to the care of Mrs. Courtney, his nearest relative in England, he once more departed for the East. For the first nine years, he had remitted annually, a handsome sum for Catherine's maintenance and education; but the last twelve months had made material change in her prospects. The Colonel's letters, and what was of far greater consequence in Mrs. Courtney's eyes, his remittances, had altogether ceased. In the last letter which she had received from him he had informed her that he had been ordered up the country, but that as soon as he was again settled in any particular station she should hear from him again. She had never heard of him since. It was more than probable that he was dead, though no certain tidings of that event had ever reached her. Mrs. Courtney was active in conjecture; it was possible that he might have died intestate, and his property fallen into hands determined to withhold from the natural heir.—He might have married some one whom he was ashamed to own, and bequeathed his fortune in favour

a second family.—Lastly, even though he should be yet alive, absence and other connexions might have estranged him; he might have begun to look upon his daughter as an incumbrance, and having renounced the idea of returning to England, have formed the meritorious resolution of leaving her on Mrs. Courtney's hands. Any of these surmises was equally fatal to the interests of Catherine. Her aunt began to look upon her as one who had no longer any claims but those of misfortune. She imbibed a selfish dislike towards the unhappy girl; a feeling which, having once taken possession of her mind, it was by no means in her power to disguise from its object; and Catherine was not slow in making the discovery.

A certain air of haughty superiority in the lady herself, and a want of respectful attention from the hitherto servile domestics, alert enough in observing any change like the present, a contemptuous glance, or ill-natured sneer from one or other of her cousins, all conspired to force upon her the unpleasant conviction that she was no longer a welcome guest. Catherine's spirit revolted at this treatment. Her heart bounded to be free; but where could she turn? She was helpless,—she had no resource against the world,—she had as yet scarcely entered it.—She judged of mankind only by the specimen be-

fore her eyes.—The view was unfavourable and she felt no temptation to seek further. Besides, she had been, in some measure bequeathed to her aunt; and Catherine felt that, painful as her situation might be, she was not authorized, without her father's sanction, to quit the asylum which he had provided for her. She had thus no alternative but to suffer. Mrs. Courtney would have been glad to have seen her niece married and out of the family, for she was handsome, and might gradually eclipse her belles; but it was impossible to doubt that she was offended, and an opulent match would give her dependent the power, as she must have the will, to revenge. She did not know the gentle being whom she would have crushed, if she thought that revenge had its place within her spirit. But she had exercised her art of tormenting too long, not to believe that the object of her hate would grasp at the first opportunity of retaliation and taste the joys of triumphing in her turn. This idea was wormwood. In their evening assemblies she almost neglected her guests in the eagerness with which she watched Catherine's movements. Her keen eye followed her from room to room.—Among their circle were a favoured few, with whom it was treason for her to be seen. Mrs. Courtney had a motive for every action of her

own, and imagined the whole world to be governed on the same principle. The very arrangement of her supper-table was not without its meaning, and Catherine's place was always assigned where neither wit nor beauty could make an impression. It might have been thought that among her cousins she might have found sympathy and friendship; but, with the exception of Julia, she must have looked for it in vain. They had their own interests to pursue, and Catherine Greville unconsciously interfered with them all. She was graceful, lovely, and seventeen. Clementina Courtney was a fine showy woman, of five-and-twenty. Catherine was daily improving before her eyes. Constant dissipation, and occasional disappointment, had taken from Miss Courtney's appearance the first bloom of youth, a loss she had no scruple to replace by art; a practice however, perfectly sanctioned in the circle in which she moved. Her mind had received the same gradual tarnish.—There was a fatal contrast between Catherine's graceful simplicity and Miss Courtney's superficial politeness. She had all her mother's narrow policy; but observation had taught her to improve upon her manners. In short, she was quite as worldly, but more dextrous. A subtle courtier, she had a thousand charming ways of ingratiating herself

where it was her interest to please; and many ingenious ways of getting rid of acquaintance whom she found it necessary to slight. She always felt the ground beneath her, and knew exactly how far she might venture. She had her near-sighted bow, her haughty salutation,—her condescending smile,—and her cordial welcome. She knew exactly whom she could oppress, and whom she must flatter, where she might safely advance the loftiest pretensions, and where it was necessary to lower her tone. Miss Courtney had entered life at an earlier period than her mother; and with greater advantages, with an air of fashion and beauty in her favour, she was not without her admirers. Martha, the second daughter, without less pretensions to personal attraction than any of her sisters, hoped to carry all before her by her conversational powers. She was not without some talent; and was an amusing but always a dangerous companion. She studied every person and object alike with the view of rendering them ridiculous; and has been heard to complain that she has been sometimes thrown among persons so absurd enough to be amusing. But she has an inexhaustible subject for her powers in the follies of her sister Seraphina; who, on her part, maintained too dignified a demeanour to condescend to a retort. This fair a

fond creature was the Lydia Languish of the family. Seraphina, who, without one touch of feeling in her heart, had always a ready tear,—who deemed a smile almost treason against the laws of sentiment;—Seraphina, who was always in love, and pronounced it the privilege of love to be unhappy;—who saw a romance in every common event, and a disguised swain in every stranger that approached; and would have refused to listen to the suit of a lover unaccompanied by some vision of adventure; all this was irresistible in Martha's eye, but Seraphina mused on unmoved. Julia, the youngest daughter, at this period just nineteen, was the only one of the family who could boast that rare and dangerous possession, a heart;—she had no other guide than Nature;—she was all life.—Her's was not that forced animation so revolting and so easily detected, but a gaiety which derived its source from innocence and a real sensitiveness to enjoyment. She was thoughtless to a fault, and often gave pain by the heedlessness of her remarks, but the offence was pardoned as soon as committed; for her ingenuous countenance showed that she could not intentionally wound the feelings of any creature in existence. She was accused of being a coquette; but if one may venture on such an incongruity, we would say that Nature

had intended her for one. Better dispositions lay dormant in her breast; and there were not wanting those among her friends who ventured to predict that the time would come, when that coquetry which now cast a glare over her manners, would mellow down into a capacity for steady and lasting love.

CHAPTER VI.

Nothing exceeds in ridicule, no doubt
A fool in fashion; but a fool that's out,
His passion for absurdity's so strong,
He cannot bear a rival in the wrong,
Though wrong the mode, comply; more sense is shown
In wearing other's follies than your own.—*Pope.*

ON Vaughan's calling next morning in Harley-street, he found Courtney impatient for his drive. "Look there," said he, as he hung with one foot on the step of the curri- cle, "what would Uncle say to this?—Yet the animals cost quite a trifle,—the cheapest things about town,—tricked Lord Piper immensely.—Think of curri- cle and all—going, going, gone, for a cool five hundred! Ay, stare if you will, my country coz. So,—ho,—Psyche,—always playing the devil."

He got down to assist his groom in arranging something about the harness of the impatient horses. "These animals have a sort of history about them; broke Lord Scamper's neck,—were bought at any money,—and presented to Piper by the next heir to his Scotch estate;—a shrewd fellow that—perfectly Scotch. But, as Piper probably intended some more exalted tumble for the termination of his career, he sold this set-out to me for whatever I would offer; so I had, as you see, my horses *dog-cheap*. Ha, ha, ha!—And now for glory!" He sprang into the curricie, and away they flew. Courtney drove like a professor of the art, and warred his way through the crowd of carriages without fear or fracture; till, at a sudden turning, the horses came in contact with a splendid barouche, from which issued a sudden scream, followed by several sullen oaths from the coach-box. Courtney, standing up in the curricie, and flinging an execration at the party inside, made an apology to the coachman; and, with a low bow, extricated his horses, and drove off. Vaughan could not restrain his astonishment at this curious misplacing of ceremonial. "Poh, you rustic," returned his cousin, with a burst of laughter; "don't you know? Yet, poor devil, how should you know, that the coachman is,—'pon honour, there's not a more accom-

plished flagellator about town,—is my L Straddle, mighty in Liverpool, and the v nity;—has had the most complete edu tion,—studied the thing,—drove the Liv pool dilly three months at a time,—wore wraprascal,—took his shillings,—growled the closefists,—and took off his cartridg gin in true professional style. 'Pon 'honor I don't know how I shall look him in face after such a proof of my want of ence." "But the ladies in the carriag said Vaughan. "Ladies! three of his Lordship's housemaids, essential for ballast. Lordship is heavy, ay, confoundedly heavy in more senses than one, so as he and coach would be *top-heavy* together—ha, ha!—he packs strong below,—loads his lumber in the hold."

"But who goes there," said Vaughan pointing to a diminutive figure, upon a g poney. "Who? Don't you know? The Death upon the pale horse!" was the answer. "Indeed!" returned Vaughan; "me have a nearer view, for it becomes every man to prepare himself for an acquaintance with that formidable personage. But w does not the apparition keep to its natural promenade, the church-yard?" "Sir, Bo street and its consequences bury as many fortunes and their owners too, as any established church-yard within the Bills of M

lity," replied his cousin. "Well, then why not keep itself to its proper hours? and it must re-visit the earth, re-visit it only by the glimpses of the moon, and in proper costume?" said Vaughan. "No, no,—nous nous changé tout cela. All hours, and all places, are now alike, or, with but a trivial difference. Pretty women meet death, I will allow, generally between twelve and six in the morning; but then it is in drawing-rooms and a parlour. Gentlemen of honour meet it, pistol in hand, from six till nine, in the shades of Hyde Park, or on the sunny slope of Primrose Hill. Merchants from nine till three, when the Stock Exchange closes, and men deal no more. Citizens, after dinner; abroad; great Lords, after supper, at home; and old men, at all hours and places." "And old women?" interrupted Vaughan.—"Of what are you speaking?" said the character. Vaughan repeated his question. "Oh, yes; I now begin to perceive. Old men! they die no where on earth. The point is, that there is, at present, no such thing as an old woman in the world; unless it be an old Admiral or General, who talks of the American war; or an old parliamentary peerage, who indulges the table with anecdotes of Pitt and Fox, and the other past and rotten of mankind. That pallid and dusty figure on the pony, is one of our most

ambitious poets; and strange and absurd enough in his choice of subjects. His last was, 'Human Life!'

A brilliant equipage now dashed by, and Courtney made his lowest bow to a stern countenanced woman, with a bronzed cheek intensely crimsoned, and a pair of wild black eyes. She received his homage with a slight bend, and then shot on like a meteor. "There she goes," said the Cicerone, "at the rate of ten thousand a year, or a week, forget which. A dazzling creature, no doubt, but monstrously dear. She has, at this moment, a whole forest of oaks, firs, and other vegetables that can be prevailed on to grow north of the Tweed, in jewels upon her brown neck." "A foreign princess?" inquired Vaughan. "Yes, foreign enough, and as fantastic enough too;—a princess undoubtedly; and to-night, you may, if you please, see her in her royal costume, seated upon her throne." Vaughan smiled. "An absolute fact," said Courtney; "and you shall see about four thousand of our first fashionable paying the most unbounded homage to her."—"Sceptre?" interrupted Vaughan. "No, to her heels! She is the great sublime of the ballet; the *deesse de l'opera*. You must take a peep literally behind the curtain, my dear fellow; or such a glance as you obtained just now may answer the purpose as well.

and learn to be surprised at nothing." Philip was suddenly interrupted by the approach of a veteran beau of the most singular description, who accosted him familiarly as they met, and whom he introduced by the name of Lord Lovemore. While he was engaged in conversation with the peer, Vaughan's eyes were riveted upon this strange compound of age, artifice, and effeminacy. Teeth of pearly whiteness, in a mouth where sixty years could scarcely have failed to commit the usual ravages;—a head not disfigured by a single grey hair,—a cravat of such enormous dimensions as almost to envelope the chin; and a bloom upon the withered cheek, altogether formed a sight too ludicrous to be resisted; and Vaughan found the effort to repress his laughter so difficult, as to feel heartily glad when my Lord's farewell bow gave him an opportunity of indulging it. "There, now," said Courtney, after they had parted, "is a man verging on sixty-five; but, to walk behind him, you would judge by his taper waist, his stiff collar, his mincing pace, and his lisping tone, that he was scarcely twenty; and his folly pardonable from his youth." "After what I have seen and heard," said Vaughan, "my old uncle's eccentricities will no longer appear a just subject for ridicule. But who is this? No doubt a singular character, and I suspect, his peculiarities, curious

as they are, at least do no discredit to his heart or understanding." "Come, come, don't be too severe, neither; you are treading on dangerous ground. To let you into a family secret, I have a notion that the worthy peer does not consider himself by any means beyond the age of captivity, and surmise that he even aspires to the honour of becoming my brother-in-law. Seriously, I believe my sister, Clementina, would look upon herself as greatly disappointed, and not a little ill-used, if she does not one day contrive to make this ancient boy her lord and master. He is rich, and draws near the end of his career; let that be your answer," said Philip. "I have heard the lady say, and certainly, in this instance, have no reason to doubt her sincerity, that the husband is an object of perfect indifference to her. She marries for a certain establishment. Such and such things she must have,—showy routs—splendid equipage—town-house—country-house; all these may certainly be gained by a marriage with Lovemore. The man, to be sure, is a little incumbrance; a certain clog on the estate, but, unfortunately being inseparable, she is content to throw the man into the bargain, and make the best of her lot, trusting to the rapid advances of time; which, without working any great wonders in her favour, may chance to give her speedy freedom."

CHAPTER VII.

Ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain ;
And e'en while Fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart distrusting, asks if this be Joy ?

Goldsmith.

VAUGHAN spent a month in London agreeably enough. He was hurried by his gay cousin from one place of amusement to another, with such giddy rapidity as to leave no hour unoccupied ; but, at length, pleasure began to pall. Novelty had lost some of its charms ; but variety would possibly still have tempted him onwards, had not a day's solitude and freedom opportunely arrived to give him leisure for reflection. The first thought which naturally occurred to him, was, that there was one article essentially necessary, to keep up an intercourse with the society into which he was introduced, and one of which he had but little command—money. He took a mournful survey of his purse. He found, that at the present rate, the sum which he had calculated upon as sufficient for his expenditure during his residence in London, would not last him above half the time. He fully felt that he had no right to encroach

upon his mother's means, nor his uncle's bounty ; and that if he found a larger income necessary for his happiness, he must toil for it, before he could acquire a right to spend it. He cast a glance at the handsome and well-furnished apartment in which he was that moment seated. It had been Courtney's choice ; and the choice of a young man of his habits, was, as might be expected, showy and expensive. Philip had besides, his own motives in this affair. He intended Vaughan the honour of supplying him with a convenient lounge. The residence of so near a relative, must be such as would not disgrace his taste in those private parties to which he intended himself the pleasure of inviting his fashionable friends ; and, above all, if he could not prevail upon the novice to break through the prudent resolutions which he had laid down for his conduct before temptation came in his way, his purpose in bringing him to London would not be answered. But a brief reflection undid the work of days : Vaughan paced the room with hasty steps. A second glance was more than sufficient to fix his resolution. " These apartments are ill-calculated for a child of misfortune, like myself," thought he, " whose very existence whose whole advancement in life depends upon the bounty of another ;" and though alone, a burning flush mounted to his cheek.

as the thought crossed his mind ; and overwhelmed him with a bitter sense of shame, and a thorough conviction of his error. He sighed. "I had too much confidence in my own strength.—I am still but too much like the rest of the world, easily dazzled, easily misled." Next to this painful review of himself, he endeavoured to form a juster estimate of his cousin's character ; but this was to the full as unpleasant a task. His uncle was evidently deceived ; but he was unwilling to tax Philip with intentional deceit. The first entrance of suspicion into a young and ingenuous mind, is a painful and repulsive feeling ; and in Vaughan's breast it was any thing but a welcome guest. In a word, he had been won by Courtney's manners, and his heart silenced the suggestions of his reason. But a more important point was yet to be gained ; and, as the first step towards his own reformation, he determined to punish himself by a day of solitude devoted to settling his accounts, and laying down a plan of rigid economy for the future. He found the latter a hard task, and solitude more irksome than he had been prepared to expect. It is the misfortune of those once engaged in the pursuit of pleasure, to be tormented with restlessness of spirit. Vaughan became every moment more and more angry with himself. He took up a book—his thoughts were wan-

dering,—the rattle of the carriages disturbe him. He walked to the window, recognise one or two new-made acquaintances ; longe to join them, and sat down to read again wit as little interest as before. “Psha,” said he and he threw away the book. “How many days have I passed in company with my mother alone, and desired no other society. Have a few weeks made all this change ? But I can write to her at least.” He wrote, and found his letter filled with fêtes and operas—the masquerade of last night—and the conversation of to-morrow. “Yet,” he exclaimed, “how can this interest her ? She knows nothing of my Lord A., or my Lady B. She will think me a fool and a coxcomb ;” and he tore the letter in a thousand pieces. Another shared the same fate. It will never do, thought he ; and began an epistle to his uncle. His ideas still flowed in the same strain, but his patience was exhausted, and he would make no further attempt. “Well,” said he, as he folded the letter, “let him see me as I am,—let me not add artifice to my other errors ;—if I am in fault, let me have the advantage of hearing a warning voice in time.” He had made a bad choice of a confidant ; but he had yet to learn the world.

For two days Vaughan rigidly adhered to his plan of solitude, which he found insufferably tedious. On the third, he accidentally

encountered his cousin in the streets. "Where have you been hiding yourself?" said Courtney, laughing. "Did you think the world was weary of you, and so resolved to make yourself rare? I assure you, seclusion has not improved your appearance, for you look grave enough to startle one, and offer no temptations to follow your example."

Francis attempted to stammer a reply, but Courtney interrupted him with, "Come, come, no excuses; I have heaps of engagements for you, to make amends for lost time. In the first place, I, and three or four more, of which number you must make one, intend galloping off to the review at Hounslow, the first thing to-morrow; then, as we return, we take a peep at old Middleton's sale, where you'll see *bijoux* innumerable, and a vast collection of still more curious people; and we'll finish the day by dining *en masse* at your lodgings. It is your turn to play the host now, and let us see how gaily you entertain."

"To-morrow, I am engaged," said Francis, hesitatingly, "neither will you find me there. I must change my present apartments, even for the short time I remain in London."

"Why, I should have thought they were handsome enough to suit the most fastidious taste," was the reply. "But come, don't look so disconcerted. If you are really en-

gaged to morrow, my friends and I will not intrude ; another day will do as well. But I must not have all my schemes put off in the same way. I have an invitation for you to spend a week at my friend the Marquis Post Obit's villa,—a charming place—delightful billiard-table—fine stud.—We play, or scamper over the country all day ;—drink claret and burgundy till midnight, and dance till daylight. There's a routine for you ! But turn round, and let me have a look at you, for pity's sake. What an object you are ? The cut of your coat is at least a fortnight later than the fashion. You actually could not make your appearance !”

“As I never attempted to lead the fashion,” said Vaughan, “and as I do not intend to accept my Lord's invitation, I imagine I shall do very well as I am.”

“So ! what change has come over you ?” said Philip, with real surprise. “What spirit moveth you, friend Vaughan, to-day ? The fact is, my dear fellow, you have been moralizing yourself into a complete fit of the blue devils ! a sort of sentimental fever upon the spirits, of which the sooner you get rid the better ; and now you emerge from your seclusion the sublime specimen of a philosopher of twenty. Is this fair—is this manly ?” he added in a graver tone. “You have entered with as much relish as any of

as into all our schemes, and now you would turn your back upon all your acquaintance, to laugh at their expense ; and will finish by stealing off into the country, to give an account to our old uncle of my unparalleled dissipation. Eh ?”

Vaughan repelled such an accusation with all the generous warmth of his nature ; but he still felt that it was necessary to be firm.

“I have been moralizing or reflecting, call it which you will,” said Francis, “on my present mode of life. I have no right to intrude my present resolutions upon you, but I have at least a right to adhere to them ; convinced as I am, that they are founded upon reason.”

“Worse and worse ! you reason too much for me,” retorted Philip ; “but no matter, we may at least be friends, whatever our difference of opinions may be ; and I did not come to seek you to part in anger : so you’ll walk with me, just as far as I’m going, and dispose of your time as you think proper afterwards.”

There was no resisting so much frankness and good-humour, at least, so Vaughan thought ;—mechanically he took Philip’s arm, and the day ended, as might be supposed under such a compact, much like those which had gone before. How many temptations to extravagance did he resist

this day ; and how often did he regret being exposed himself to them ? How many invitations did he decline ? How many false excuses did he make ? And how often the glow of false shame mount to his cheek

“What is this new feeling that oppresses me,” said he, when he retired to the solitude of his own chamber. “I am merely endeavouring to keep the course which prudence prescribes to me. I am merely combating the thoughtlessness of my nature.—I have the means of supporting existence but I am extravagant.—I see myself outdone ; perhaps the jest of a few paltry coxcombs whom I despise.—I cannot launch forth in the character of a man of fashion, and I am weak enough to regret it. I have done wrong;—I have injured no one.—Of what then am I ashamed ? Psha,” said he, “am I ashamed of being poor ?”

CHAPTER VIII.

Duke. Your mistress, is she lovely ?

Valerio. Fair i'faith

To eyes just come from Barbary.

Duke. Then she is young ?

Valerio. There have been younger maids

That have seen pretty infants on their knee.

Duke. Then she is wise ?

Valerio. Ay, wise as those that think

That they shall trap me into marriage bonds.

Safe bind, Safe find.

“Nor at home to any one but Lord Love-
more, and one or two others, whose names I
could not hear, is my mother’s order for to-
day,” said Julia Courtney, in a tone of evi-
dent displeasure, as she entered the room
where Catherine was seated alone, engaged
in her favourite amusement of drawing.
“And Frederic Gordon promised to call here
to-day ! This it is to be subjected to mater-
nal control ! Heigh, ho ! my dear, I wish I
were my own mistress !” Catherine sus-
pended her employment for a moment, and
looked up doubtfully in Julia’s face. Julia
pursued her soliloquy,—“My Lord is the
hero of the day now with my mother ! Every
minor consideration gives way to this one im-
portant point ! Heavens ! how Clementina
will lord it over us, when she becomes Lady

Lovemore! I think I see her with her haughty stare, ready to crush me into insignificance, offering me a seat in her carriage with provoking condescension; and inviting me to her nights with such a patronising air! Oh insupportable! Gordon and I will never be able to enter the lists with her! When I think of those things, do you know, I'm half-sorry I have suffered this silly business to proceed so far. Ambition flutters round my heart, and seems to tempt it to turn traitor. "No, no," said Catherine, earnestly, laying her hand upon her cousin's arm, "such inconsistency is not in your nature! I know you better than to believe you are capable of following your sister's steps, and sacrificing all to ambition. Consider a moment,—are all the toys which Clementina will purchase by her marriage worth the price which she will pay for them?" "I believe not," said Julia, hesitatingly; "you plead Gordon's cause eloquently—well, my lot must be speedily decided. But why that look of consternation; are you startled at the effect of your influence?" "No," returned Catherine, "but startled to see you form such hasty decisions in an affair of so much importance. Gordon's prospects are anything but flattering, at present. Is there no medium between utter desertion, and plunging headlong into difficulty? Time may work a

change in his favour.—His exertions may ultimately prove successful,—his father's heart may soften towards him, can you not wait the result?" "Oh! say no more of it, my dear; I'm not in a humour to listen to a lecture just now. Did I not forbid him to think of me any more? Can I help it, if the man is obstinate, and will not obey me? And did I not tell him distinctly, that I began to detest him? Can I help it, if he will not believe me? Oh! yes; Time may work a change in *his* favour, but it will work none in mine," she continued as she surveyed herself in a large mirror. "A few more years in this world of dissipation, and I shall become ugly, artificial, and almost as heartless as Clementina herself! Will Gordon's constancy stand such a test, think you? But, to start something new, what think you of this new arrival—this country cousin—this peerless rustic—this Vaughan?" Catherine bent her head over her drawing, dipped her brush hastily in the pallet, and muttered a few indistinct phrases, in which the word "indifferent," was the most audible. "Heavens!" said Julia, laughing, "my question was very *mal-a-propos* just then. I quite forgot the nature of your employment! Come, come, you have totally spoilt your beautiful drawing,—you may as well

burn it at once and thank me for contributing to its destruction!" "Really," interrupted Catherine, "you are most provoking—This cousin of your's is nothing to me!" "I'll engage he's of a different opinion," said Julia, laughing; "there never was a man in this world that had not as large a share of vanity as—as—a woman! But I had forgotten to tell you, Philip informs me that this rural swain has already taken fright at the specimen he has seen of our town-life, and afraid of being contaminated by the sight of so much dissipation,—is for making a hasty retreat into the country. But I find a much more natural cause for his determination, and pronounce him afraid of losing his heart, is it so, my sweet coz?" "I see nothing very extraordinary," said Catherine, suddenly recovering her self-possession, "in this; he never intended making a very long stay in London, and after having protracted his departure much beyond his original intention, is it at all surprising that he should at length fix the time for his return?" "There is no throwing you off your guard," said Julia, a little chagrined, "no surprising you into an expression of human feeling. With your caution,—you and Vaughan would be the best matched pair in Christendom. What I complain of in your paragon is, his unnatural prudence. I hate a man

that does every thing by rule,—that even falls in love with mathematical precision,—sees his danger at every step he takes, and then retreats with as much caution as he advanced. Gordon and I will dash through the world in another style. But here comes Martha, to give a turn to our thoughts. Now we shall have all the scandal of the last night's ball."

"Oh, Ladies!" said Martha, laughing as he entered, "have you heard of Seraphina's adventure? She'll hold her head so high, there will be no enduring her for a week to come, at least!" "I think I had a hint from my mother," returned Julia, "but let us have our edition of the tale." "Seraphina, as usual," resumed Martha, "had danced but one quadrille. You know, it is an established principle with her, that to do more argues state of robust health, quite foreign to the delicacy and sensibility of her nature. She yielded fatigue, and placed herself in a contemplative attitude. Her partner, a man of exquisite gallantry, seated himself beside her, and announced the same intention, such to the discomfiture of several damsels; for he was a most captivating person, and quite the magnet of the night. Seraphina enjoyed her triumph,—

'She looked a goddess, and she moved a queen.'

She played off her whole artillery of sentiment.—He was an adept in the art of admiration; they sate in a conspicuous corner of the room, apart from the general group, quite picturesque—every eye turned upon them. The scene was worth a season of quadrilles. My mother was on thorns,—could scarcely hold her cards, and lost every game. At the first moment she could, she flew from the card-table, and drew Seraphina aside. ‘Seraphina, my love, you are making yourself quite ridiculous, every one is looking at you.—Who is that man?’ Seraphina contrived to set all at rest, by a mysterious but satisfactory whisper, of which I could just hear, ‘Sir Mark Thornton—estate in Yorkshire—ten thousand a-year!’ Without a word in reply, my mother turned and resumed her seat. Sir Mark returned to his station, and Seraphina was allowed to make herself as happy and absurd as she pleased for the rest of the evening.

“But the best part of the affair is, that Sir Mark is said to be actually paying his serious devoirs in another quarter.” “Then the kindest thing you could do by her,” said Catherine, “would be to undeceive her.” “I undeceive her?” said Martha, “not for the world! She is in Elysium at this moment; and to undeceive her would be to deprive her of some very agreeable hour

I have not cruelty enough for those things. But here comes Gordon. What's the countersign to-day, Julia; to be admitted or not?—he'll hardly escape exclusion, for I overheard a charitable dowager last night inform Mrs. Courtney that his father was more incensed against him than ever. I was right—there he goes—poor fellow, how dejectedly he walks away."

"'Tis no matter," said Julia, looking after him; "tyranny like this only incites one to be more fertile in expedients. I shall find an opportunity of letting him know that it was not by my order that he was refused admittance. Heigho! I wish I were my own mistress!" concluding as she began.

CHAPTER IX.

Innocence shall make
False accusation blush, and tyranny
Tremble at patience.—*Shakspeare.*

"I WONDER what has become of young Vaughan; we have not seen him this week past?" said Mrs. Courtney, one morning,

"and I am sure that is cause for surprise. I wish he were gone to college, with all my heart. The company of an angel would begin to weary one unless his visits were, as angel visits are said to be, 'few and far between.'"

"You must ask Catherine," said Martha. "I'll answer for it, she can give you the best information as to his movements, for they are always together,—always in some secret conference,—have you not observed it?"

"Poh," said Mrs. Courtney, carelessly. "it is not worth observing,—let them enjoy themselves,—it would be a suitable match, beggar with beggar, and an easy way of getting rid of both. Let them marry if they love if they like, and live upon it if they can."

"I'll engage," continued Martha, "they find some more substantial means of existence for all that. Catherine has more shrewdness than you give her credit for. Depend upon it, that she knows more of Vaughan's prospects than you do. I should laugh amazingly if she were in the secret the whole time, and were to secure the treasure for herself! I am sure, nothing can be more plain. Catherine and my brother were once the best friends imaginable; now they are exquisitely reserved whenever they

meet. It is only a little pardonable inconsistency on the lady's part. The other scale preponderates, and she has altered her views."

There was just a sufficient mixture of truth and falsehood in the statement, to give an air of probability to the whole. In the days of Catherine's prosperity, Courtney had contemplated the prospect of her father's return, a wealthy Indian, and the fortune which she might expect, offered an easy method of repairing his own. Colonel Greville's late mysterious silence had given the alarm to his sordid relative, and Catherine, though wholly unconscious of his matrimonial plans, could not avoid being hurt at the change, and naturally repaid his increasing coldness with a proud and marked indifference.

"I had never seen the matter in this light, I own," said Mrs. Courtney, in a voice of serious alarm. "A pretty scheme to enter into an inexperienced head of seventeen, but I'll settle the business, and speedily too. Does any one know where she is?" and she ordered her to be summoned. Catherine did not make her appearance directly, and when she did, she came dressed for a morning walk, full of gaiety and good humour, and totally unprepared for the storm that threatened.

"Where are you going in such high spirits,

young lady, may I take the liberty to ask?" said Mrs. Courtney, haughtily. Catherine, awed by her tone, replied timidly, "Julia, Mr. Vaughan, and myself,—” she hesitated. "We are going to the exhibition, and several other places, I think. We shall be out all day." "A pretty trio, and a fine *exhibition* you'll make of it. If you had condescended to have asked my advice on the subject, you had saved yourself much trouble. As it is, you will have the goodness to make up your mind to remain at home. I can hear of no rambles with such an escort.—Have you no regard to appearances?"

"But, dear aunt, we have promised, and we expect Mr. Vaughan every moment."

"A promise given without my permission, was made to be broken," said Mrs. Courtney. "Let me tell you, young lady, that in your father's absence, (and would to Heaven he were returned to free me from such a responsibility,) I am your sole guardian;—what would the world say of me if I were to authorize such indiscretion?"

"There is little danger. Madam," said Catherine, smiling, "that the world would take the trouble of inquiring into the conduct of such humble personages as ourselves!"

"I beg, Madam," interrupted Mrs. Courtney, hastily, "that when you are seized with such a sudden fit of humility, you will at least

save *my* family out of the question, and even take into consideration your own relationship to myself. *My* connexions are extremely well known, and you can scarcely appear anywhere without a chance of being recognised. And to go yet farther, should your father ever return, how should I answer it to the world, my conscience, or him, to suffer you to elude my vigilance, and throw yourself away upon a beggar?"

"There is little danger of that, Madam," said Catherine, pointedly; "I have experienced too many of the evils of poverty to run any risk of voluntarily encountering it."

There was something ambiguous in this reply, to Mrs. Courtney's prejudiced ear, and she directly gave it her own interpretation.

"It is as I suspected," she burst forth. "You know more than I do.—I understand you.—You run no risk of encountering poverty with Vaughan.—He has gained the old man's ear, and you are to share his prosperity. An admirable scheme, and worthy of its contriver!"

At this cruel accusation the poor girl burst into tears. "You have gained one point, at least, Madam," she said. "You have deprived me of the power of disputing your commands, for you have left me neither spirit nor inclination to mingle in cheerful scenes

to-day." As she spoke, her cheek crimsoned, and a sense of the injustice with which she was treated, roused a feeling which could no longer suppress.

"I must leave you," she continued, as she advanced towards the door; "to so unjust suspicion it were idle to reply; but one word before we part.—Your last expressions, I am sure, have betrayed the real motive of your prohibition, and taught me how to value your counsel. You need be under no apprehension of my eluding your vigilance.—There is no danger of my being put to the trial; and if, at a future time, I were to marry impudently, or unhappily, the sin be on another head; and this, the only excuse I could make to my father or my conscience, the want of which I am made to feel every day of my life, the *cruel* want of a home."

"Dear Catherine," said Julia, affectionately, as she returned to the room where they had been sitting, "you have been crying tears—some harsh expression of my mother has again disturbed you, but you know her."

"You have guessed rightly,—I do not expect to deny it. My aunt has forbidden my innocent indulgence, but it is not the paltry disappointment,—it is not the prohibitive but the manner of it, her cruel insinuations which have hurt me so deeply. But it is to you that I should complain."

"Dearest cousin, you grieve me," said Julia, with unaffected sincerity; "your situation is painful, but bear with it for awhile. These days may pass away sooner than you think of; I may perhaps marry before you, and the first stipulation I should make with my husband, would be, that in my house there should always be a home for you. I think I can form a pretty near conjecture as to the nature of those insinuations to which you allude, but as I am the physician, I must hear the whole case fairly stated, before I can propose a remedy."

Catherine had scarcely made the necessary explanation, when Vaughan was seen at the door.

"What excuse shall I invent, or shall I tell him the whole truth; explain my mother's fears, and bid him be gone, and show his dangerous face here no more?" said Julia, laughing.

"Hush, you wild girl," said Catherine, in real alarm, placing her hand before her cousin's mouth.

When Vaughan entered, the traces of tears on Catherine's face, the subdued smile of Julia, and the evident embarrassment of both perplexed him.

"I will tell all, positively, if you leave it to me," said the provoking Julia; "the truth, and the whole truth." Vaughan expressed surprise.

"Ask that lady," continued she, "I am excessively awkward at inventing excuses, and besides, am not altogether so submissive; and when my schemes of amusement are defeated in one instance, my brain's on the rack, till I can invent another; so I'll leave you to entertain each other," and she tripped away.

"Now, if she was not quite so giddy, it may venture to use such an expression," said Vaughan, as she closed the door, "Julia Courtney would be one of the most charming creatures in the world."

"No, you must not judge her too severely," said Catherine, "she affects more thoughtlessness than belongs to her character and disguises feelings which honour her. She has a *heart* superior to her manner; there is not a kinder one in the world. I have reason to say so. But for her,—" as she broke off abruptly, afraid of giving tolerence to feelings which at that moment overpowered her.

"You are disturbed Miss Greville," said Francis, gently, "something has distressed you.—If my presence embarrass you, I will leave you; but I own," he hesitated, "I am unwilling to go, if it is in my power to offer any service."

"I will acknowledge," said she, half averting her head, "there is something on my mind which renders me almost unfit for"

"You have probably perceived, that situation in this family is any thing but pleasant. It is daily becoming more insupportable. My aunt, a slave where it suits her purpose, is a tyrant to those within her power. The expression is a strong one; but authorized by the treatment which I receive." The tears flowed afresh.—"Some act of injustice has roused this natural virtuous indignation. Let me know all, the world shall go hard with me, but I will find the means of protecting you from said Francis, with generous warmth. Perhaps I take these things too much to heart," returned Catherine: "but a sense of injustice renders the feelings acute. From pride or ill nature, my aunt has forbidden my excursion of to-day. It is the tone and manner with which she enforced her commands, which I find it so hard to endure. Most cruel insinuations—but what am I to do? The substance of her charges," continued Catherine, weeping at the recollection, "could not interest you to hear; but you have seen enough of Mrs. Courtney, to be assured that the object of her incessant persecution cannot fail to be miserable."—"I have seen enough of her to know," said Francis, gravely, "that she has not the heart to be merciful, and that the protection which she extends must be any thing but sincere."

—"It must be confessed," said Catherine with a sigh and a smile, "that men are the more fortunate portion of this world at least. A Woman has no chance but to struggle through a life of trial, and, it may be, to die in the struggle. To man, how many professions, how many resources, are open: what noble opportunities lie, for instance, before a soldier; if he does his duty, he has the rank and fortune what they may, the proudest eye in the land can have no right to look down upon him."—"True," said he, animated by her remark: "you have painted the profession in its genuine colours, you have more than ever confirmed my resolution of adopting it. Our situations are alike; our tastes should be the same." "What have I said, what have I done?" cried Catherine, vainly endeavouring to conceal her agitation. "I do not think of it. *You* have prospects before you; an uncle that loves you, a kind parent and a natural home. I have none of those. Our circumstances are not alike. Be persuaded," she continued, with increased feeling, "and do not break—;" she paused; she added, in a suppressed voice, "your mother's heart."—"It is our mutual misfortune," returned Francis, "that our fates bear too close a resemblance. It is this cruel similarity which deprives me of the power that my heart is longing to possess, the power

ing you. But something must be thought I am on the eve of quitting London ; but not leave you till some plan has been med more conducive to your future com-

My mother is kind and generous. In house you must seek an asylum, and her find that protection and friendship which you will never meet with here." But cely had this unguarded speech, inspiry the feelings of the moment, passed his than the recollection that his mother yet to be consulted, and that her circumstances were not such as to warrant his even ing it to her, flashed across his mind. erine saw and pitied his embarrassment. eel at the same moment," she replied, kindness which dictates, and the ob es which forbid, my accepting such a osal. No ; my education has been lill. The few acquirements which I posse were not indeed bestowed upon me for purposes to which I intend to turn them ; t may be but a temporary trial. I am proud to submit to contumely ; but not proud to use the only means in my power asserting my independence."—"It : not be, it cannot be," said Francis, wn completely off his guard ; "it would k my heart to see you thus. Promise at least, that you will do nothing further you hear from me. You were not born to

be the slave of another's will, the victim of—but—but I have no right—I ought not to interfere with a scheme so honourable to yourself, since I can think of nothing, can offer nothing better." He walked to the window breathless with emotion. "What am I saying I shall betray myself," he exclaimed, almost unconsciously uttering his thoughts aloud "no matter; it is already done."

After a short silence, which neither had the power to break, he turned to Catherine whose cheek burning with intense agitation and eye fixed upon the ground, showed that his words had been deeply understood. He took her passive hand. "I have gone too far, dear girl," said he, in a tone that unconsciously sank almost to a whisper. "I have no right to put you to this pain. Your feelings should have been sacred to me. I ask no promise. I am about to seek my chance of fortune through the world. But may I say it, the highest delight of success, the noblest triumph that the world could offer would be the power of lightening the least of your sorrows." "This is rashness, enthusiasm," sighed Catherine, without raising her eyes. "Ay, madness, if you will," said Vaughan. "But here, Catherine, dearest girl! Catherine, I offer my love!" His voice passed away, as he pronounced the words: his eye was fixed on her. The dark hair had fallen

thickly over the cheek that glowed through it: he drew the tresses aside, and saw it suddenly grow as pale as death. Her hand was still clasped in his: he felt her shudder and give way. Her lips quivered, but she could not utter a word. Vaughan was in terror: he flung open the door of the conservatory, the gush of fragrance from rose and myrtle revived her, and she listened with the strange and mysterious delight of a happy dream to the romantic eloquence of first love. At length her habitual presence of mind returned. "Mr. Vaughan!" He suddenly dropped her hand at the coldness of the name. Catherine smiled: "Well—Francis!—if it must be so; I can pardon the past; but on the single condition, that it must not occur again. I have been unwise; perhaps we both want to learn wisdom on some matters. But I absolve you from all promises." He gazed on her reproachfully. "I mean," said she "from all promises that you find it at all embarrassing to keep. Let us have done on this subject. We have others to consult. You have a mother. I, if Providence in its mercy so will, a dear father." She wiped away a tear, and as she raised her dark eyes to heaven, with a look between resignation and hope, with her white hands faintly clasped together, and her lip trembling with unuttered prayer, Vaughan gazed upon her, as

he would upon an angel in the act of adoration. At this moment, the door was thrown open, and Mrs. Courtney almost burst into the room. "So," said she, "just as I thought Pray, Miss Greville, how long has this gentleman been here?" Some general answer was returned. "Well, well," continued the angry lady of the mansion, "I presume you have exhausted all your morning topics and I now wish to have some conversation in my turn." Catherine fled from the room like a frightened faun, giving, as she parted an imploring glance at Vaughan, to restrain his evident irritation. We shall not detail the conversation that followed. The lady had by much the greater part of it to herself. It was alternately prudence, persuasion, and menace; the avoidance of paying boyish attentions to girls not come to years of discretion; the dangers of a continued residence in town; and the follies of a continued residence in the country. On the whole, she considered the army the very finest, most pleasant, and most promising for a young man. The age was military; the public munificence was all turned upon soldiership. There were certainly occasional hazards from climate and other casualties; but of those a brave man took no account, and those were surmounted every day. Her advice was, Heaven knew it, given with a re-

lactant heart; but she felt for his situation, anxiously, deeply felt for it, and from the bottom of her heart could wish to see his name in the next gazette. The lady was eloquent; Vaughan open to conviction. But half her eloquence was unheard, while he was conjuring up the vision of Catherine in her chamber, friendless, and lovely, and weeping over the sullen prospect of a life, which he would be too far away to cheer. Her smile rose before him soft, sweet, and innocent; the brown ringlets again clustered over her cheek richer than roses; the splendid eye again shone, full of the spirit of that Heaven on which it gazed; and he half worshipped the image which his fancy had made.

That night was sleepless. He was fevered with distracting thoughts. "Had he not been rash in his declaration to the woman of his heart; was he not binding her in vows which she might yet wish to break; was there not such a thing as female inconstancy? His profession too, was it not almost fixed already by his uncle? How should he answer for the pain which his only parent would feel at his going into the army, a career of which he knew her habitual dread. Was Mrs. Courtney's advice sincere, when he knew her hardness, selfishness, and duplicity of soul? If he fell, where was Catherine's hope of evading the difficulties of her forlorn life?"

As the first step to coolness of thought determined to leave London.

CHAPTER X.

They that have grown old in a single state are generally found to be morose, fretful, and captious—tenacious of their own practices and manners, soon offended by contradiction or negligence, and impatient of any action, but with those that will watch their nod, admit themselves to unlimited authority.

Dr. John

ON rising, he immediately began his preparations for the journey. He had not long employed, when a knock at the door announced Courtney.

He entered laughing. "Then the news is true," said he; "London air is too thick for the delicacy of your feelings; or are you out of purse, or out of favour with some one or other, which of course your pastor thinks the much worse evil of the two?"—"None of those," returned Vaughan; "I am under an absolute necessity of returning to Halston-Hall. I have some important business there; a point to carry, which must be settled without loss of time." Courtney

gaiety forsook him at once ; and looking in his cousin's face, " Have you had the news by letter ?" and he caught up a letter which Vaughan had written to convey his farewell to Catherine. The direction caught his eye ; his countenance turned livid, and his teeth gnashed. It was but the emotion of a moment, and he laid the letter on the table unopened as he had taken it up. Vaughan was still busy assisting his servant in packing. " Come now, be sincere ; was the news by express ?—is the old fellow dying ?—is he dead." Vaughan turned in surprise : " Dead ! who ?"—" Curse his cunning !" muttered Courtney : " we have been ousted completely." He turned to his cousin, " Are you going to take possession of the Hall ?"—" Yes," was the answer. Courtney darted a look of fury at him, and was about to rush out of the room ; Vaughan caught hold of him. " What, in the name of all extravagance, is the matter with you this morning, Philip ?"—" I am going to take possession of my old bed-chamber, and no more, for just two days ; and after that, if I can obtain my uncle's leave, going to perhaps a bed-chamber where the sky is the canopy, and where men sleep without disturbing their relatives."—" The old fellow still alive ; a commission ; the very thing !" and Courtney, starting from his reverie, shook the

future soldier's hand, with more than feigned eagerness. "Your purpose is manly and honourable. Luckless dog that I am, I must be confined to this wretchedly inactive life at home, while you are gathering laurels for my boy. You'll cut us all out when he returns. But"—and he took a turn through the room in thought—"you are going to the hall; egad—I now recollect, I have business there, put off too long, 'a truant disposition,' good, my Lord;" I will have the currier with you in ten minutes, and we will be together."

Courtney's inclination for the journey was decided, as Vaughan became more communicative. He saw still more clearly, that nothing could be more favourable to his own views than to encourage his cousin's predilection for the army, as affording the fairest means in the world for getting him completely out of the way. The chances were, that they might never meet again during his uncle's life-time, and in his rival's absence he might regain his former influence. Vaughan, delighted at the interest which he appeared to take in his concerns, and pleased at receiving advice so consonant to his wishes, overlooked the selfishness which dictated it. There was something so friendly in his tone and manner, that from one communication Vaughan was irresistibly led on to another. It oc-

red to him that he might make him the confidant of his affection for Catherine, and the bearer of the letter, which he could find no other means of conveying. Little did he guess in what dangerous hands he was placing his secret. "Give your word not to divulge my secret; for your mother—excuse me, Philip—you know, your mother"—"Oh, yes," said Philip, laughing, "she has a lynx's eye, but you have told me nothing new in this, for I more than suspected it before; however, your secret's safe, and if I can do any thing to serve you or your fair one, rely upon me." A servant now brought in a letter which had been sent from his house; he glanced it over, seemed surprised, and suddenly recollecting an engagement in town, begged Vaughan to apologize to his uncle, and bade him a hasty adieu.

The old man received his nephew with kindness, but some surprise; for he had taken his resolution so suddenly, as to have no time to warn his uncle of his intentions. "I should rather have expected to have heard of your being on the road to Oxford by this time, than to have seen you here, young man," said he gravely.—"Yes, sir," returned Francis, "but having a day or two to spare, I abridged my stay in London, to pay my respects to you, and also to consult you on a subject near my heart, and which I

could not so well explain by letter.”—“A subject near your heart! what have you to do with affairs of the heart at present? No foolish love business, I hope; if so, I warn you, you have chosen a wrong confidant.”—“No, sir, you mistake,” said Francis, ~~embarrassed~~ gently embarrassed. “I am thinking, sir,” at length, he said, “that it will cost you a heavy sum to maintain me at college for the three years it was your intention that I should remain there”—“O, poh, poh—is that the result of your reflections?” said the old man fretfully; “it is all true, but that is not a point to be considered now. It is all settled, man.” “But I thought it right, sir, before I took my departure, to inform you, that my prepossession in favour of a military life is still the same, and likely to remain so. I have weighed the arguments on all sides. The Church, the Law, and Commerce, have all been severally proposed. The Church is too inactive, the others are too laborious. There is a drudgery, an up-hill labour connected with these last; and all of them offer but few allurements to a man without prospect or fortune; they are too slow for my ambition.”—“Ambition—drudgery—what new-fangled words are these? Hah!” said the old man tartly, “let me tell you, young man, ambition is not necessary to get on in the world; perseverance is a great deal

better. You must be content to do as others have done before you. I began the world, sir, pretty much like yourself—without a penny; ay, without a penny, and I may venture to say, almost without a friend;—but I toiled early and late, denied myself all idle pleasures, was at the desk from sunrise till moon-light,—my fingers cramped, my face pale, my brain addled with incessant application;—always calculating, always busy, sir, and always at hand when any thing was to be done at a moment. Drudgery! I had enough of that; but here I am in my old age, and long before old age came upon me, independent, sir, and with, as you see, money to spare.—Genius, boy, genius is not required to make a fortune. An indefatigable spirit will do more in a twelvemonth than one of your lazy geniuses in a life; and as to advancement, you'll find that to the full as slow in the military line as in any other, I fancy.”—“Possibly, sir, but, in a life so varied and interesting, I could wait with greater patience the reward of my services; and at the worst, should promotion be slower and my disappointment more severe than I had anticipated, there are ten chances to one that a friendly bullet may rid me of all further anxiety.”—“Where did you learn this language, pray? Don't conjure up such fancies; it's an insult to me—it's flying in the

face of Providence. I had hoped to let nature take its course, and have gone down the grave before you," murmured the man. "Well, Sir," said Francis, affectedly pleased, by his emotion, "I will not urge you by urging the point ; but one word—I have eased my conscience of the weight which oppressed it—I feel convinced that the money which you have set apart for me was intended to contribute to my happiness, and I would merely represent to you, that that purpose would be much sooner gained by the purchase of a commission."—"This is fair, this is manly," said his uncle with a smile ; "there is something I like about this, sir—but I am an old man, and must be a little obstinate. You shall spend one twelvemonth at college, and if you still hold the same mind—why, there I am struggling with fate—and you shall have a commission after all."

CHAPTER XI.

"How quickly nature falls into revolt
When gold becomes her object !
For this the foolish over-careful fathers
Have broke their sleep with thoughts, their brains
with care,
Their hours with industry."—*Shakspeare.*

THIS arrangement being made, a week saw Vaughan established at Oxford. His uncle's generosity made him consider it as a duty to endeavour to combat his own inclination, and, if possible, ultimately to give into his views. He resolved to turn his mind to study, form but few acquaintance, and extinguish, if possible, the spirit-stirring enthusiasm within, which perpetually whispered of drums and trumpets, adventure and glory. To his resolution of solitude he did not find it so difficult to adhere ; for amongst those with whom it was now his lot to mingle, he found few with whom he felt any desire to become acquainted. But he missed the society of Courtney. It had become almost essential. There was a lifeless monotony in his present existence, trying to him. In the hour of study, his books were his companions, and he had learnt, at such moments, to desire no

other; but in the hour of relaxation, he felt the want of some associate with whom he could unbend his mind. The necessity of confiding in some one person appears a feeling implanted in our nature; and to converse on indifferent subjects when the mind is occupied with one, is an art difficult to be acquired by old or young. He was long without finding a substitute for his absent friend. But there was one amongst his young companions, to whom a similarity of feelings drew him more closely than the rest. George Mordaunt was universally acknowledged to be the most well-meaning fellow in the world. Vaughan soon perceived that there was this difference between him and Courtney; he never refused a service that was in his power to perform; he was liberal to a fault; his purse was as open as his heart. To his ready and genuine kindness, Vaughan could not long remain insensible, and he and Mordaunt became, by insensible degrees, companions. but he soon perceived that all his excellent qualities was obscured by one fatal drawback, a total absence of discretion. It never entered Mordaunt's head, that one whose intentions were so good as his own, could have any occasion for reserve. The freedom with which he told his own concerns often astonished and amused his circle, but, unfortunately, his friend's secret was as unsafe in

possession as his own. Those who knew good-natured and friendly spirit, only ed at his thoughtless frankness, until it nearly concerned themselves, and they then join in the general voice of conation ; but the more designing took adge of his foible, to forward their per-views. Mordaunt was heir to large rty, and could afford to be sometimes—but instead of profiting by experihe only laughed at caution, and pursued ame course as before. “How could e so ill-natured, Mordaunt,” said one fellow-students one day, in the presence ughan, “as to blunder out to the proc-at I was out last night. When I trans-in future, I shall take care to keep out ur way.”—“I beg you ten thousand ns, my dear fellow,” returned Mordaunt, ally forgot that we live by rule in this unded college.”—“Psha, the old *excuse*,” ed the other ; “yes, yes, we all know o be a good fellow enough ; but of what quence is that to me now ? I tell you, han,” he continued, “this is but one of asand tricks this fellow has played me. ve you an instance ; I have an old aunt, whom I have expectations, who you uppose is the most tedious being in the , but whose favour I should entirely were I to abandon her entirely : so

I content myself with one visit, and three or four letters of apology in the course of the year. The very last which I wrote to her was something in the same strain, viz. hard work—incessant preparation would confine me to College, even during the vacation—could not possibly find time,” &c. and would have answered the same purpose as those which had preceded it, but for my obliging friend here, who let out the very next time he saw her, that he and I had been spending six agreeable weeks at Brighton, by way of relaxation after our fatigues; when next I make an excursion, I shall choose another companion. You may despise my caution or not as you please, Vaughan; but I give you this timely warning, that a careless friend is as dangerous as an open enemy.”—“Poh, don’t mind him,” said Vaughan to Mordaunt, who looked a little graver than usual at the rebuke, “don’t mind him,” he repeated, as the offended student closed the door, “he is the most perfect cynic of the age;” but in after life, when circumstances recalled this little incident to his mind, he had reason to acknowledge the justice of the Oxonian’s remark. “Well, but—but to the point,” said Mordaunt, recovering his good humour by the observation, “what were you going to say?”—“I had nothing further to add,” resumed his friend, perhaps a little checked in his con-

munications by what he had just heard. "Oh, poh—a little intimidated—don't like to trust me, perhaps," said Mordaunt; "but no matter, we'll not quarrel upon that subject. If I had an uncle as generous as your's, and as willing to oblige me, I should certainly take him at his word, and not waste so favourable an opportunity by standing on a point of ceremony. What can the old know of the feelings of the young? Let him purchase the commission, and have done with it. Besides, take my word, if your uncle is serious in his intention, he will grant your request as well now as a twelve-month hence. Now's the time for improving your fortune; the very time for promotion. Should peace be proclaimed in a year or two, then come the horrors of half-pay; add to which, your uncle is ancient, and may die before you claim his promise; and do you think his heir, whoever he be, would be inclined to make up the loss to you?" The thought had more than once occurred. "Unless," concluded Mordaunt, "you have the good-luck to be the heir yourself."—"Not I; I have no such thought. I have reason to think that my prospects would close with my uncle's death; and whatever might be the inclinations of the heir, I suspect it would not be in his power to serve me," his mind reverting to more than a suspicion which he

entertained of Courtney's pecuniary embarrassments. Unwilling to perplex himself by thinking more upon the subject, his resolution was taken; and without delay he wrote to his uncle. The letter was scarcely despatched, when, with the inconsistency of human nature, he regretted having written. What would his uncle think of so impatient a spirit? Might he not altogether retract his promise? Should his request be granted, then came the thought of the unprotected state in which he must leave Catherine; no plan yet devised for her; and, lastly, the disappointed hopes of his mother. "Yet it is for their sake that I am impatient to begin my career. Could I see them settled beneath the same roof, I could leave England, I think, almost with pleasure." He had received one letter from Courtney, in which he mentioned that his family had left town as usual for the season, and that the haste in which these arrangements had been made had deprived Catherine of the opportunity of prosecuting her scheme for the present. He had heard nothing since, and became most anxious to hear more, when a second letter of Courtney's arrived, more unwelcome than even his silence.

It was a request to borrow a sum of money large enough to startle him, and in a name to which he could refuse nothing. "It was

for Miss Greville—the means of supplying her at that moment were not available—she was infinitely reluctant to apply, but the case was urgent, and the money should be returned in a few days.” Courtney had repeatedly borrowed small sums of him to his great inconvenience, but the punctuality of the payment had disarmed him of all fear, and he had lent as freely as it was asked; but the present sum appeared enormous—and what Catherine could want with it, living beneath her aunt’s roof, amazed him. “Poor girl,” thought he, “her aunt is narrow, nay, parsimonious to her, and yet expects her to maintain an appearance equal to that of her daughters. Dress has, without doubt, its temptation to one so young, and debts may have accumulated unawares.” In short, the heart invented the excuses, however little the head might sanction them.

Yet he felt in some measure disappointed in her; and, was he ever so much disposed to grant her request, where was he to find the means? Once he thought of writing to Catherine upon the subject, and explaining to her his inability, notwithstanding his inclination to serve her; but he reflected that she had chosen another agent from unwillingness to appear in the business, and it might hurt her feelings to adopt this plan. While he stood painfully deliberating, a let-

ter from his uncle was put into his. He tore it open with wild impetuosity, the enclosure which it contained filled his doubts before he had time to read was the exact sum necessary for the purchase of the commission. He examined the note again and again: he could scarcely believe his senses. This prompt conclusion was more than he had expected. When he came to read the letter itself, he was quite so well satisfied. It struck him that there was something unusually cold in the style—a something which seemed to him to be a sense of honour—“A sense of honour has informed me. You have broken your word, but be true to mine. Expect nothing from me.” Yet this might be all very well; it might be his uncle’s unostentatiousness of conferring a favour, or merely momentary vexation.

“Philip must have had some interest in this business. He must have known his uncle’s intention, and it is this that has led him to apply to me, and it is for this that I had rather lose it all than disappoint him. It is only delaying the purchase a few days. The decision was made, the money is paid, and Francis Vaughan almost as good as has it. In a day or two he received the line from Philip acknowledging the receipt of the money, and overwhelming him

thanks and protestations in his own name and Miss Greville's, and assurances of not remaining long in his debt. Day after day, and week after week passed on, yet still he heard nothing further. The secret of his distress he confided to none. He wandered about restless and unhappy. Mordaunt saw that something disturbed him, and was incessant in his affectionate inquiries to know the result of his application; but prudential and honourable motives alike determined him upon maintaining a rigid silence.

He was in this frame of mind, when a letter from Mr. Vaughan inquiring into the cause of his delay, increased his perplexity. "You could not let me rest," he wrote. "You were all anxiety, all enthusiasm in the prosecution of this darling scheme,—and now, it is no sooner in your power, than you linger irresolutely without taking any steps towards its completion. This boyish inconsistency is not what I expected from you. You would do well to write immediately, and exculpate yourself." The receipt of this letter plunged Francis into absolute despair. He had no resource. What reply could he make to so just an accusation? How had his uncle's generosity been repaid. He wrote to Philip, enclosing his uncle's letter, and requesting him to relieve him from so unpleasant a situation, by an immediate payment of

the debt. Philip replied by many expressions of regret, that the money being disposed of, it was not in his power at that moment to return it as he intended; he had no idea that the case was so pressing; thought that he intended to remain a little longer at college; advised him to persuade his uncle to this measure; tell him, that he was convinced by his arguments, and thus coax him into a little necessary delay; and in the course of a few months he should be in a condition to discharge the obligation; at all events, happen what would, he entreated him, as he valued his honour, not to betray in what manner the money had been employed. Vaughan's eyes began to be opened to his character. But reflecting on the subject was idle; the point was to act. He could not follow this man's advice. There appeared a meanness in it which surprised him. Yet he could not remain where he was; he was doing nothing—worse than nothing. There was an oppression upon his spirit which he could not bear. "But I will not add guilt to folly, deceit to imprudence," said he. "I cannot write upon this unfortunate subject,—nor can I submit to leave the country like a criminal; I cannot thus requite my uncle's generosity. I will tell him all—no, not all but enough to criminate myself, and not my friend."

am going to leave college," said he to
unt, "and shall probably return to it
re. I have met with a disappointment
has distressed me." "I can in part
ts nature," replied Mordaunt. "Come
did. Can I serve you? I can be se-
i occasion. But I am off for London;
is the letter of introduction which you
ed me to your relatives there?" Fran-
itated, for his opinion had somewhat
l since the offer of this introduction,
e trembled for Mordaunt's purse.
shall have it, my dear fellow," said
out one word of advice—don't be so
lending your money in London as
ive been here, or I am not sure that I
ing you a service by extending your
ntance. Courtney now and then ex-
his income; and as you are so willing
, he might be apt to borrow, that's all."
all think of your caution," answered
unt. "But I have purchased expe-
: I have gone far enough in that way
y." And with these words they parted.
n Francis set out for his uncle's house;
tation was so great as almost to be-
him. He made no inquiry on his ap-
but mechanically, and with a beating
followed Peter as he led the way to
ll-known parlour, which Mr. Vaughan
his constant sitting-room. When the

door was opened, it was some relief to perceive that it was vacant. Though noon, the shutters were closed, and it bore evident marks of not having been occupied that day. A momentary chill struck him. "Is there anything the matter?" he inquired, as the servant still lingered about the room, and busied himself in various trifling occupations. "My master, Sir, has been ill and confined to his room," said he, as he removed the cover from the chair, a symptom that it had been long untenanted. "A fit of the gout with a low fever, the doctor says—but in my mind the fever is more upon the spirits. My master's been an invalid many a year, but I never heard him sigh and groan so much as he has done of late. I am glad you are here, Sir, for he has often mentioned your name." Francis walked to the window to conceal his uneasiness. "His honour comes down to-day for the first time," continued Peter, and so saying withdrew. The old man had apparently been long indisposed, for the garden, once so remarkable for neatness, was much neglected; even the weeds had made their appearance in sight of the parlour windows. The favourite medals had been disarranged by some careless visitors. All bore marks of the absence of the master's eye. "Can it be anxiety on my account?" said Francis; but these re-

ms were painful, and without any object that of dissipating them, he continued investigation. The mantel-piece was covered with cards of inquiry, and even while he sat himself in perusing the names, or three carriages drove up in rapid succession to the door. "This it is to be rich. The rich man is sure of the world's sympathy. When *my* father lay dying of a broken heart, and a gleam of brighter prospect might have restored him to life and health, his last hours were soothed by no card of inquiry. Yet these were brothers, beneath the same roof, and I the child, am a dependent upon the bounty of her."

At this moment Mr. Vaughan entered and took hold of the arm of a servant. Francis stepped forward to offer his assistance; he perceived that his infirmities had alarmingly increased; but the partial light of the room had deceived him. "I am sorry," said Francis, "to hear of your indisposition."

"Till this morning I was ignorant of it," said his uncle. "I never inquired, Sir," said his uncle reproachfully. "My last letter has remained unanswered." "True, Sir, I have excused the imputation of seeming neglect; but the subject was unpleasant, and I did not bring myself to reply to it." "How," returned he, "the subject unpleasant,

the thing once nearest to your heart? But you are embarrassed—out with your story at once.” “The money, the purchase-money which you were kind enough to send me—” he stopped. “Yes, yes,” returned old Vaughan, naming the sum with a decision of tone that shewed, whatever other infirmities were creeping upon him, that his memory remained perfectly unimpaired, “has been paid, I hope, before this.” “Sir, you distress me; it is no longer in my power. It has—” “What are you going to say? Been squandered—unworthily bestowed. And now, what further can you expect from me?” “Nothing, Sir,” said Vaughan, in a tone of humility. “Yet, I could not meet you, at this moment, if my conscience did not acquit me of any intentional wrong. I have been imprudent, but not guilty.” “And imprudence was guilt in your situation, young man. Miser as they call me, it is not the loss of the paltry sum which disturbs me. But I must know more. What folly, what madness could urge you to the utter ruin of your own prospects?” “Spare me, Sir,” said Francis, “honour forbids me to say more.” “Honour,” said his uncle contemptuously: “it would have been well had your sense of honour prevented the necessity of concealment.” “Thus far I will venture to say in my own justification,” returned Fran-

cis, "it was no idle folly of my own—it was to procure no selfish enjoyment. It was for a friend." "A friend—the boyish acquaintance of a day," said his uncle, turning away. "It would have been well if in commencing your career, you had engraved the golden maxim on your heart—Be just before you are generous. It must have been a sudden friendship, indeed. To my knowledge you had not even an intimate acquaintance before you went to Oxford, and that is but the affair of a day, with the exception of your cousin Courtney, and he knew your circumstances too well, and is besides too honourable, to have sanctioned this foolery." Never was Courtney's secret in such danger as at his moment. The consciousness that a word would turn the scale in his favour, and offer a complete justification of his conduct, strengthened the temptation—it was a struggle, but generosity was triumphant.

"Have you no further confession to make?" exclaimed the old man. "Nothing, Sir," said Francis; "I am not without some faint hopes that the money may yet be recovered. There was a time when I considered my friend's word sacred; but I have yet a purpose in view. To your assistance I own I have forfeited all claims. It is my intention to enter the service as a volunteer. Experience will have taught me caution, and I am

not without a proud hope, that my future life will be such as to regain your good opinion." The old man gazed upon him with a softened countenance: "You have it," said he, extending his hand, subdued against his will." I always liked Courtney—I have known him long;—but you are—no matter, you are not hardened; you are my brother's image. Yet I will not oppose your plan: it is necessary that you should suffer the consequences of your imprudence. But should your conduct be such as I expect, remember that it is still in my power to serve you."

CHAPTER XII.

For I have peeped into thy covered heart,
And seen it blush beneath a boastful brow,
For, by strong guilt's most violent assault
Conscience is but disabled, not destroyed.—*Young.*

To leave England without a personal application to Courtney, appeared to Francis to be taking the business too easily,—to remain in London, after the point was once ascertained, was equally foreign from his purpose—

It is the presence of those we love, the habit of social and friendly intercourse, that forms the tie of country, and he felt that with his heart thus seared, he could leave England without much regret. Not to waste time in idle consideration, since delicacy, in such a case, was scarcely to be thought of, on the morning of his arrival, he set forth in search of Philip. He had some distance to go, and as he walked along, his eyes bent on the ground, too full of his own thoughts to pay much attention to outward circumstances, a person, of whose approach he, till that moment, was not aware, suddenly struck against him. Looking up to apologize, he perceived the very object of his thoughts before him, Courtney himself. "Am I so much diminished in figure, my dear fellow," said Courtney, with his usual gaiety, "that you find it impossible to avoid running over me, in your progress?" Vaughan was thrown actually much off his guard by this unexpected meeting, as to feel at a loss how to reply. Courtney, without noticing his confusion, continued a string of vague inquiries.—"Glad to see you, but where did you spring from—when did you arrive?—what inducement so strong enough to allure you back again to this wicked town? In plain language, what is your object here? love, friendship, or business, eh?" Francis was not just then in his

happiest humour, and those sallies could not provoke even a smile. "Love and friendship both," said Vaughan, pointedly, "I have learnt to consider as mere names; but, since you will have it one of the three, you are at liberty to conjecture business to be my object, and, to waive all ceremony,—business with you. Are you prepared to answer the question which you doubtless anticipate?" "Not I," said Courtney, with a faint laugh; "I was never prepared to give a reason upon compulsion in my life, nor to listen to a lecture neither; so if that is your business, I beg leave to adjourn the question to another meeting." "Stay one moment, sir," said Vaughan, sternly, "are you then determined to deny my claims upon you? Answer in a word.—Am I, by the same stroke, to lose both my money and my friend?" "Oh, no, not at all," said Philip, "you shall never lose your friend, you shall always find me the same." "I believe I shall," said Vaughan, with a look of scorn: "I must put my plan in execution immediately, I have no other resource; I shall volunteer into that service, which you have deprived me of the means of entering in a more desirable way;—but my uncle—" "My uncle," said Philip, grasping his arm, "surely you have not, you could not be so base as to betray me." "No," returned Vaughan, "I have kept my word

you—I could wish you had done the same with me; but though I have come off conqueror in the struggle, I will own to you the temptation was, and still is, strong.” “Come, come this way,” said Philip, his voice increasing with Vaughan’s warmth, “let us choose a more retired street—this must be adjusted before we part; I will order where you are, and speak a little more; your frantic gesture, and loud tone, and drawn eyes upon us. In the first place,” said he, after a moment’s silence, “I forget, I fancy, what I hinted to you some time since, that Catherine Greville had no share in this business—you would not have her name to be brought forward, I am sure.” “I am not quite sure of that,” answered Francis, “since if she were capable of acting thus, the high opinion which I have entertained of her, is, I must own, mistaken. What possible occasion could Miss Greville have for so large a sum?” he added, in a tone of incredulity, which staggered Francis. “Honour, honour, Vaughan, a lady’s business, ask me no further,” said he, putting his hand upon his mouth, with an air of mystery; “to do her justice, she knew the value of my application; neither did she lightly apply to me;—accident made me acquainted with the immediate necessity which she had for the money. I was anxious

more universal occupation. Vaughan, in the hope of some opportunity of speaking to Catherine unobserved, in the general employment, paid his visit. The drawing-room was empty, and seemed to have been already prepared for the reception of a splendid party. A light step came behind him—it was Julia's. "So, Cousin," said she, laughing, "you are determined on doing the honours to the last; well, then, as I am not likely to have you for an adorer, and as I hate to submit to the imputation, without a chance of the reality, we must not be seen *tête-à-tête*, charming as it is, so follow the Fairy Goodwill, on pain of—what,—ay, of not getting a smile from Catherine!" She held out her hand; and Vaughan followed her to what might be called the council-room of the family.

Into this room he had never been admitted before, and it had a formal and official look. Packets of letters, arranged with the exactitude of office, seemed to be the principal furniture of its walls, and Mrs. Courtney's writing-desk held a distinguished and portentous place in the apartment. From this spot had issued all the despatches of this formidable lady, in all her intricate transactions;—in this room were received those persons whom no one acknowledges, but to whose agency so many among the *beau monde*

are indebted for an appearance in the fashionable world. Here, too, were held the debates on those delicate affairs, which sometimes embarrass polite mammas encumbered with accomplished daughters.

At present, the transmission of the little enclosures of bride-cake seemed the great business of the day; and Vaughan was ordered to take up the pen, and act as Secretary, under the orders of Martha. The fair object of the ceremonial sat leaning, like Juliet,

“Her hand upon her cheek,”

in some meditation, in which, at least, joy seemed to have no share. “To whom shall I address this heavy envelope?” said Vaughan, taking up a packet larger than the rest. “To Miss Matilda Matchem, Sir,” said Martha, “the odious Matchem; and every grain of it will be a punishment to her, if it were ten times the size.” He took up another. “Let that,” said the tender Seraphina, “go to my bosom friend, Felicia Fondle, a due reward for her hypocritical affection, her malicious spirit, and her bitter tongue.”

Clementina now raised her head, and dashing a tear from her eye, “Mr. Vaughan, before they are all gone, let me secure one for —;” she stopped, and grew pale; in the next moment, the colour returned, and flush-

ed even her forehead. "For whom?" said Vaughan, holding the pen suspended. "For a villain, Sir," said the lady, rising from her seat, and pacing the room, "for a heartless, worthless, callous villain! But I will punish him; if he has a soul to feel, he shall feel; if he can be wrung by disappointment, by shame, by scorn, I shall be avenged, ay, though I died for it." She sat down, for a moment, exhausted by passion. Catharine who had, till now, scarcely raised her eyes from the pile of finery which her delicate fingers were wreathing into shape, now sprang from her chair, and tried to soothe the enraged beauty. Even Martha, who began to think the scene not altogether fit for a stranger's eye, had left her occupation of cutting the bride-cake into sections, correspondent to her loves and hates, and joined in the attempt. The tender Seraphina sat still, and applying her volatile salts to her nose with more assiduity, only sighed over the weakness of the one sex, and the wickedness of the other. "Come, Vaughan," said Martha, turning to him, as he looked, in astonishment, at the group, "you have seen our tragedy rather unexpectedly, have you nothing reviving to tell us? Is there no news in the living world? No one come to town, that *would* not stay in the country; no one gone to the country that *could* not stay

in town?" "No one dead?" sighed Seraphina. Vaughan tasked his memory in vain. "No one of all the multitude of our acquaintance married?" said Catherine, attempting to direct the inquiries to some less perilous topic. "Yes," returned Vaughan, submissive to her voice, "I was just told of the marriage of a Sir Mark Thornton, to a city fortune of the largest dimensions." He was made aware of this formidable inadvertence, by a general stare of the family circle, followed by a sigh and a scream from the gentle Seraphina, who rushed over to a sofa, and flung herself on it, in a hysteric. Mrs. Courtney, at one and the same moment, entered the room, heard the news, and overwhelmed the luckless narrator. "Monster! barbarian! what have you not to answer for?" Vaughan, insecure what portion of the philippic was meant for the faithless lover, or whether it was all devoted to himself, attempted to make an apology, and attempted to make a retreat, equally in vain. The lady intercepted both, and fixing her eyes on his, with a withering look, "Mr. Vaughan," said she, "I am altogether unacquainted with your motives for interfering with the concerns of my family, for intruding on their interests, for injuring their prospects, for depriving them of their rights; but a stop shall be put to this." The current of her passion

had carried her words thus far ; but Vaughan's spirit had been now roused, and the indignation gathering in his countenance warned her of betraying her secret. She turned to the sofa, where Seraphina lay in the tenderest posture of affliction ; " Look there, Sir," she continued, " a beloved child made miserable by the duplicity, the baseness, the want of feeling in your sex, Sir. She is dying of wounded sensibility. That wretch Sir Mark Thornton ; he shall suffer for this. An action for breach of promise, shall teach him the penalty of paying attentions to his superiors, and then leaving them to this cruel neglect." " Neglect, Mamma," said Seraphina, starting from the sofa, with recovered nerves, and voice in all its vigour ; " I beg leave to say, that I feel nothing on the subject ; I despise the person in question too much to feel any thing but utter contempt ; and more than that, I always despised him. I knew him to be as base in spirit as he was clownish in exterior ; with the head of a spendthrift, and the heart of a swindler. And now, ladies, and Mr. Vaughan, that you have heard my confession of faith, I hope I may have liberty to leave you to your meditations." She took her mother's arm, who looked all astonishment, and whom, with an exertion altogether unexpected in this child of all the delicacies, she absolutely urged out

of the room. Vaughan, who had only added surprise to his wrath, was now about to retire, when Martha stopped him. "No, no, cousin, we want you still: those little packets are not yet addressed. In my writing, they would not have half the poignancy that they will carry direct to the heart from a stranger's hand. It will be evident that a stranger has been admitted into the Cabinet! for this," and she pointed round the room, "is the notorious diplomatic spot, the chamber to which the bluest in Blue Beard's castle was colourless; here we have been charged, one and all of us, with decapitating more reputations, and cutting the rosy chains of more courtships, or the iron ones of more marriages than my humble memory can reckon."

Catherine raised her eyes with a deprecatory look at Martha. Vaughan listened and laughed. But Julia, who had sat gazing on her sister, the reluctant bride, with a varying countenance that showed some unusual and deep anxiety of her own, turned, and with a feeble smile that yet lighted up her fine eyes in sudden sunshine; "Yes, Martha tells nothing but the truth. We are in the full possession of the hate, or envy, or scorn of the million of misses who marry or are given in marriage. We are currently compared to Macbeth's Witches, though, instead of amusing ourselves with overturning churches,

sweeping away harvests, or drowning chants and mariners, our deeper devastation is said to consist in sowing what is reaped in the prolific form of family quarrels, in ruling enamoured people from churches in giving fools who *will* marry very excellent hints for drowning themselves."

Catherine, in the hope of stopping strange confidence, rose to leave the room. Vaughan was soon at her side, and reluctant to bear the imputation of a private interview she turned to the window. Their thoughts were on other things, but their conversation was on the bride; and Vaughan heard for the first time, that Miss Courtney was about to make an alliance which she hated, to forsake a fluctuating lover, to whom she had given all the heart that she had to give. This lover was a Colonel Windham, a man of intelligence and feeling, who had been attracted by her animated manners, and fashionable beauty but had been subsequently alarmed by her extravagance, and was now probably altered altogether by her coquetry.

A splendid equipage now drew up to the door; the hall echoed with the thunder of the showy footmen who sprang from beneath it. "It is Lord Lovemore's carriage," said Vaughan. Miss Courtney actually bowed from her seat. "Not at home; for heaven's sake, say I am not to be seen."—"What

cuse shall be made?" interrupted Martha. "All, any thing, say I am gone out, busy, sick,—or dead." Her voice grew hollow as she pronounced the word. She was pale as marble, and stood tottering in the centre of the room. Vaughan flew to her. "Go," said she, not attending to him. "Martha, say that—yet—what can be said—but that I *must* marry him—to-morrow if he will; but I must be spared to-day. Let me have this day at least to myself—let to-morrow bring misery—ay, and revenge." The females gathered round her. Vaughan offered his consolation, and suggested that it was not too late to break off the alliance; that she ought not to throw away her happiness; and that he was ready to communicate her wishes to Lord Lovemore. She seemed to recover her recollection at the name, and turning full upon her astonished adviser, pronounced, in a stern and contemptuous tone, her surprise that he should suppose her capable of violating her engagements; that his interposition was as unnecessary as it was uncalled for; and that she would be Lady Lovemore, live or die. Vaughan shrank from the rencontre; and the lady calling to her sisters to follow, walked proudly out of the room.

Vaughan would have pursued the steps of the indignant beauty, and wooed and won forgiveness, but for a reason irresistible. One

of the groupe had remained, and remained so deeply busied in fixing an ostrich plume in a turban, that she seemed to have no thoughts for earth beside. The imperious summons to the sisters had not stirred her from the interesting study to which she had thus given up eye and ear; even the closing of the door, which echoed through the building, had not withdrawn a glance from the spangled object of her meditation. This profound absorption was unbroken, until Vaughan stood behind her chair, and pronounced her name. She started at the sound, and had almost suffered the future ornament of the lovely and irascible bride to have touched the floor. On perceiving the solitude, she apologized, and rose to leave the apartment; yet she was detained, by a gentle hand and a gentle history. How she listened, or how she looked, is not for us to reveal, while an eloquent tongue, animated by young hope, and vivid with young passion, unfolded its imaginations. But when that tongue at length came to tell the result of all the lover's prospects, the necessity for separation, and the resolve to try the chances of fortune in the most precarious of all its forms, Catherine hastily drew a chair and sat down: still he spoke, and she listened without a reply; but he felt the hand, which had lain in his, tremble, and grow chill; and

he one which hung upon her lap, a diamond tear fell and glittered. Anxious to diminish a distress, which yet, by the age inconsistency of love, gave him deep thought, he hastened to a conclusion; simply saying, that "he would now look upon himself as having established a claim to be called on whenever she might a second time make a wish unfulfilled." She raised her head at the words, and repeated, "A second wish!" with an emphasis, which brought on an explanation.

Courtney's finesse filled her with astonishment and vexation. She glowed with displeasure, and adjured Vaughan to believe her altogether incapable of the grossness of borrowing his money, or of applying for it through another, and, of all men, through one whose artifice, meanness, and hollow promises she thoroughly knew and scorned. In strong and lively vindication of her feelings, she would have almost knelt, to protest before Heaven her innocence of this debasing and unfeminine application. Vaughan pressed her to his heart, and with a delicious dream-like joy gazed on her beauty, her eyebrows knitting and quivering over her thoughtful and impassioned eye, her cheek suffused with the crimson of offended delicacy, her lip breathing sounds that to him were sweet beyond all melody. If he had

never loved her before, he would have been now her slave. In silence, and the whole solemn and burning homage of the heart, he devoted himself to her. Their eyes were by one movement and unconsciously turned upon the sky, as if to register their mutual vow, and from that moment they were bound to each other for ever.

CHAPTER XIII.

Poor wretch !

That for thy mother's fault, art thus exposed

To loss, and what may follow. Farewell !

The day frowns more and more ; thou'rt like to have

A lullaby too rough.—*Shakspeare.*

THE bridal morn rose full of "the pomp, pride, and circumstance" of glorious wedlock. The street was crowded at an early hour with the equipages of his Lordship's relations, and of every person of fashion whom the lady of the mansion could conjure to this triumph of her dynasty. Lord Lovemore's lingered latest, but it was only to overwhelm all the others by its splendours. His Lordship's coach, chariot, and travelling carriage

made their appearance in slow succession, drawn by prancing bloods, and surrounded by outriders, in liveries absolutely covered with lace. The multitude in the street were all admiration; the scarcely less numerous multitude that filled the windows, as far as the train were visible, probably mingled their admiration with envy; even in the drawing-room itself, echoing as it was with compliment and congratulation, there might have been other feelings than those of pleasure. But in Mrs. Courtney's bosom all were swallowed up in one—pride. Clementina had not yet made her appearance. But her mother was equal, if not to charm all hearts, at least to fill all eyes. The first grand object of her life, her dream by night, and her meditation by day, the last web of her long labour of stratagem and subserviency, of reluctant endurance, and pining vanity, was on the point of being complete. "Hope elevated, and Joy brightened, her crest." She had been handsome in her youth; she had preserved her features less with the childish pleasure of a belle, than with the diligent care of a professor. Time had left his inevitable traces; and restless anxiety, and stern passion, had not helped to smooth them. But she was still showy; and on that morning her countenance, robed in smiles and rouge, and her stately figure decorated with all the

grace and costliness of fashion, seemed to demand the homage of earlier days.

As Lord Lovemore, bowing with the humility of a courtier, led her forward, there was a sudden buzz of applause. To half the circle she was totally unknown; and his Lordship was about to be congratulated on his bride; when Mrs. Courtney, quick as lightning, perceived this formidable misconception, and as instantly put a stop to it, by announcing her daughter Clementina. The folding-doors were thrown open, and the bride entered, attended by her sisters and Miss Greville as brides-maids. There was a strange contrast in her movement to the haughty and exulting advance of her mother. She leaned on Catherine's arm, and walked slowly, and as if in mental pain. She was veiled; and the whole train, with their white dresses, soundless footsteps, and melancholy air, suggested to Vaughan the procession of a nun going to the cloister. The anxious mother instantly caught Clementina's hand, drew her aside, and in a brief but bitter whisper, upbraided her with this perverse reluctance to be happy; and demanded whether she was prepared to sacrifice, for a whim, for a childish dislike, the whole hopes of the family, her own elevation, her own pride, and, more than all, the power of inflicting punishment on Wind-

ham. Clementina answered not a word; and Mrs. Courtney looking upon the conquest as gained, and turning to the company with one of her most subduing smiles, laid the passive hand in Lord Lovemore's. His Lordship started back; he already held another passive hand, and had already poured his happiest eloquence into another passive ear. The figure beside him was perfectly bridal. The circle were in surprise; his Lordship, in some phrases of superannuated gallantry, begged that he might have the honour of developing the fair incognita. She resisted; and with a scarcely suppressed laugh held down the veil, which, with her deep bonnet aiding her attitude, had completely concealed her face. The laugh was spreading through the room, when Mrs. Courtney, to whom that morning was obviously destined for the full display of all her faculties of government, pressed forward, and pronouncing the words, "Intolerable! Julia, for what is this levity?" suddenly drew off the veil, and showed the smiling features of the handsomest of her daughters. Julia's apology for a dress so closely resembling her sister's was soon made, she "wore it to express her respect for his Lordship! Her taking his best speeches to herself, arose from the unexpected delight of being made love to in so charming a strain, and for the

first time too in her life. In short, she could not bring herself to doubt his Lordship's sagacity so far, as to suppose him capable of being deceived, and she had even begun to think that he was sincere." His Lordship professed himself delighted with her dexterity, expressed his susceptibility to the charms of wit and beauty in every shape, and threw himself on the mercy of the bride. Mrs. Courtney's temper had been urged to the utmost, but with an effort little short of a pang, she kept it down, and simply begged, with a treasure of after-vengeance in her eye, that this playfulness might not retard the important *business* of the day. It was announced that the carriages were ready. His Lordship now took the hand of the bride, and with the same smile which he had worn at the birth-days of half a century, implored, probably to prevent further mischances, that the envious veil might be raised that hung between him and so much beauty. He raised the veil; and Clementina's fixed eye overwhelmed even his urbanity for the time. He almost started back as he saw its cold and sullen glare, the lifeless hue of her countenance rouged as it was, and the livid paleness of her lip. But it was too late; the veil was again dropped; and her mother followed her to the carriage, where, flinging herself back on the seat, she

remained silent and motionless, till the long and pompous cavalcade had arrived at the church-door.

Marriage is not a joyous ceremony. The solemnity of the ritual—the sacredness of the altar—the gravity of its minister—the newness of the life into which it leads—the separation, partial as it may be, from early ties and fondnesses, are all adverse to joy. The Hymen of the ancient world, with his flutes and dancers, his cheerful torch, and laughing countenance, has given way to a loftier but a more subdued spirit; and the noblest rite of friendship and love is often consecrated by tears.

This marriage was the stern service of revenge. An angry and a tempestuous heart was hid in the holy words that passed over the bride's lip. Her mother doubly anxious, as the last moment of possible hesitation approached, watched every moment; and whispering in her ear to be firm, stood in an almost involuntary attitude to receive her if she should fall. Catherine, scarcely less anxious from pity, was at her side, alternately listening to the ceremonial and sustaining the bride. Vaughan and Courtney, in the remoter circle, equally gazed, and were equally spell-bound by the contrast. Catherine, with her noble countenance, filled at once with high devotion and human tender-

ness, her full and splendid glance cast upwards in the more sacred portions of the rite, and her lip, touched with sweet seriousness and cheering smiles, as she turned towards the victim, gave Vaughan the idea of Beauty and Compassion personified beside Despair. Courtney saw, with sudden scorn of himself, only the loveliness which he had lost; and formed his dark determination to thwart and crush the rival who had mastered his interest in her heart.

The ceremony approached its conclusion—sighs and tears were among the circle—but the bride neither sighed nor wept. She pronounced the solemn words that gave her to another, without a change of feature; but, at the moment when she was turning from the altar, a fiery flush crossed her countenance, she pressed Catherine's wrist, and murmured, "All's over; Windham and I are parted for ever; I am revenged."

All was now congratulation; the tears were wiped away, and a long succession of festivities was announced for the return of his Lordship and the bride, who set off from the church-door for their country-seat, followed by the gaze and the plaudits of the multitude.

The remainder of the marriage-party returned to Harley-street to a *déjeuné*; Mrs. Courtney, now secure, now the mother of a

peeress, and now entitled to enrol herself in the list of fashion, to which she had hitherto put forward so restless, yet so indecisive a claim, already wore the air of rank, and presided at the table with a haughty dignity of a totally distinct character from the expression which smoothed her powerful' physiognomy an hour before. She left the care of her guests to her son, who, adroit and animated in his office, brought frequent laughter to the lips of half a dozen young belles clustered towards the foot of the table, sometimes disturbed the deep conversation which was going on between Vaughan and Catherine, disconcerted even Martha's acidity; and, what was more to the purpose, completely covered a long lesson which Mrs. Courtney was pouring into the ear of a young and opulent Baronet, on the advantage of early matrimony.

The Baronet had danced with Julia at a rout a few evenings before, and had been so energetic in his admiration, that there was no alternative but of Mr. Courtney's calling him out, or Mrs. Courtney's taking him in. The stately matron chose the latter, and when she had developed her opinions at sufficient length, she looked round for the bewitching Julia to take the chair in her absence for a moment—a moment which

was to be fraught with the Baronet's captivity for life.

But his time was not yet come. Julia was not at the table. On further inquiry, she was not in her chamber; she was not even in the house. A sudden suspicion, formidable to all her prospects, flashed through her mother's mind. There was confusion at the table; there was no less confusion in the servants' hall. The matter grew more serious still. A sort of temporary tribunal was formed of the guests, the mother, and son, and daughters; and the whole domestic tribe busied in the ceremony were put in a state of inquisition. The only fact ascertainable by the Court was, that Miss Julia had not returned to the house. A reluctant chambermaid was, at length, brought forwards, who acknowledged that she had packed up Miss Julia's ornaments and a travelling dress the night before, and that she believed she was gone away, "she supposed, like Lady Lovemore, to be married and happy with the man of her liking."

Conjecture was now turned to this "man of her liking." It struck at once upon Mrs. Courtney; and she pronounced, in a voice of wrath and disappointment, the name of "Gordon." The name echoed and re-echoed round the table. "Gordon, what Gordon? of the Duke's family? of the Gene-

ral's? of the Ambassador's?"—"No," said Courtney, bitterly; "a simple fortune-hunter and lieutenant; with his commission in place of rental and pedigree."—"A beggar," sneered Martha, "and I don't perceive that he is likely to improve his circumstances."—"A reprobate, an absolute swindler; nay, a younger son;" said Mrs. Courtney, pacing the room in undisguised distraction.—"A scoundrel, and I'll shoot him for this day's work!" exclaimed the Baronet.

Vaughan had been hitherto restrained by Catherine's imploring eyes. But his temper had its limits; and his knowledge of Gordon inflamed him against the taunter. He touched him, and repeated his word—"Scoundrel." Then turning to the crowd, who had already made way round him, said impetuously, "I demand an instant apology for that word, in the name of Mr. Gordon." The crowd stared—the Baronet drew back;—"I here publicly declare," said Vaughan, "that no one is entitled to fix a stigma upon the character of that gentleman, whom I know to be a man of honour, of integrity, and of feeling. What he may have done in the present matter is not to be decided on until the circumstances are known; whether he may have been compelled to it by ungenerous treatment, or led by the passion that

the noblest minds have often found irresistible. But I could pledge my own honour for his; and in my presence, at least, no man shall do him injustice with impunity."

The circle stared in utter astonishment but the effect of his warlike denunciation was admirably pacific. Courtney, who had risen from his seat, evidently full of indignant eloquence, suddenly sat down again without a word. The ladies of the family restricted themselves to glances of the severest displeasure compatible with ladies' eyes. Vaughan looked round for one in whose eyes such glances would have given him pain; but she was gone. He had now finished all his offence, and he prepared to take his leave with a determination never to stand beneath the roof of that acrid and worldly household again. At the door of the apartment he slipped his card into the Baronet's hand, and sternly and slowly marching down the stairs had leisure to hear the burst of galling laughter, that pursued him on the closing of the door.

He had reached the hall, which the footmen, occupied in the family debate, had left deserted, when his meditation was broken by a whisper;

"How silver sweet are lover's tongues by night,"

says Shakspeare; and he might have added

by morn, or noon, or dewy eve. Lutes and lyres, pedal harps and grand pianos, are notoriously dulness and discord to it. He turned; and saw Catherine's glistening eye; and led by her beckoning hand and fairy foot, he followed to a small apartment off the hall.

What they said to each other there; how Catherine, applauding him for his defence of Gordon, adjured him to let the slanderer rest under the mortification which he had already received; how she deplored Vaughan's departure, and vowed, ay, with a beating heart, and many a tear, more precious than the pearls round her neck, to follow him in thought through all the changes and chances of his adventure; and how he bound himself by his hope of seeing those bright eyes, and pressing that lily hand, and hearing those sweet lips again, to be true; to have her image first, last, and midst, in all his thoughts; to keep his heart sealed up against all else; and to feel every hour an age, until he should once more set his foot upon British ground, and live in the sunshine of her smiles! Why should I tell such things, when every soul that reads these pages will have imagined them a thousand times better than I could tell them, nay, has felt them. For who, among mortal men or women, has not been once in the paradise of our world of dreams?

There was a little ornament of sapphires

hung by a chain from Catherine's neck, which she took two or three times between her delicate fingers in the course of this conversation, and looked at it as if she could have wished it conveyed away by magic; yet there it remained, perplexing her touch, and perpetually fixing her almost unconscious eyes.

The voices had both sunk into whispers, and from whispers into silence, unless a sigh now and then was communion. The minds of both were busied with thoughts which words are not made to utter; their looks were cast upon the ground, and they might have been taken for two statues of tender and noble beauty; but for the movement of the lover's hand, which gently unbound the sapphire locket from his lady's bended neck, and fastened to its chain a miniature of himself.

This was done slowly and timidly; but it was done without resistance, only a deeper crimson glowed on Catherine's cheek, and when the miniature was securely fastened by its golden links, it was suddenly hidden, and pressed within the folds of her robe; beyond these signs nothing told that she was acquainted with the little transfer.

Her lover stood silently gazing on her, as she less placed than enshrined his picture in her bosom; then bowed his lips to her

band, bade God bless her, and rushed from the mansion. Catherine, with an effort, walked to the door of the apartment, and closed it, then tottered back to the sofa, and, half fainting, covered the picture with kisses and tears of delight and anguish indescribable.

CHAPTER XIV.

"In the midst of our societies, divided by so many prejudices, the soul is in a state of continual agitation. She ceaselessly revolves within herself a thousand turbulent and contradictory opinions, by which the members of our ambitious and crafty circle are habitually endeavouring to subjugate each other."—*St. Pierre*.

OTHER, but scarcely less exciting, feelings were very busy in the drawing-room. The sudden scorn which had been awakened by Vaughan's unfashionable defence of the absent, had burst out on his departure with a general animation, vivid beyond all the rules of well-bred apathy, and excusable only in the case of ridiculing a display of honour and manliness in an individual equally new and obscure.

But even the delights of ridicule have their

close, and the next subject for the general eye was the mistress of the feast. There are some people as much made to sit at the head of tables, as others to wait at them; and if chance sometimes puts in the chair the personage whom nature would have placed behind it, there was no such mistake in Mrs. Courtney's location. If she had during the morn,

“Moved, as the jewelled crown were on her brow,”

she lost no portion of her royalty on the throne of the *déjeuné*.

But in all her attractions, there was a wandering from the business of the moment, that gradually became palpable to an alarming degree. She took champagne with Jack Flatter, the moment after she had excused herself to a peer of the realm; she helped a cornet of the lancers at the moment when a general officer had fixed his eyes on that pheasant's wing which was destined to elude his plate for ever; a Knight of the Garter, drank the health of the happy pair, at the unfortunate crisis when a Knight of the Bath was in the act of proposing the same civility. Mrs. Courtney bowed and smiled, but her return was made to the K.C.B. Fate was against her to-day, and a noble ministerial duke, involved in a high flirtation with the lady of a patriotic member of the House of

Commons, was absolutely forced to interrupt the most ardent and continued of all his whispers, by a disconcerting glance sent direct from the unconscious Mrs. Courtney!

It was obvious that something singular was working in a spirit hitherto so accurate in its distinctions. The duke and the lady suddenly rose, and their rising was followed by the departure of the offended individuals; still the mistress of the mansion was involved in a deep conference with the baronet, who seemed bound by an uneasy spell. The topic was evidently the elopement of her daughter, and the purpose was to persuade Sir Thomas to set out in pursuit. To this, however, his objections, if not eloquent were strong; for no argument applied to his passions could find its way to his understanding.

In woman as in man, if it be not profaneness to compare the sex with their natural slaves, the idol with the worshipper, it will probably be discovered, that opposition as often invigorates as defeats a favourite purpose. As the baronet's aversion to waste his time and his money in chase of the culprits grew more decided, Mrs. Courtney's determination to pursue and punish acquired strength.

But she found the necessity of changing her tactics. She communicated to her guests, now reduced in number, the resolu-

tion to set out herself in pursuit, and her refusal of all companionship. The latter part of her resolve was no sooner expressed, than it produced an absolute tumult of entreaty to be permitted to attend her. "The hazard of so long a pursuit,—the necessity for a friend of the family to be on the spot,—the importance of compelling the plunderer to give up his lovely victim by the most summary mode," were all urged with a rivalry, which showed, at least, that generous friendship had not yet taken its flight to the stars.

The difficulty now was, how to get rid of the numerous offers of carriages and attendants and the gallant masters of both. But the lady was firm, remoter interests submitted, and the strugglers were at length reduced to Philip Courtney and Sir Thomas Foxhall.

The former insisted upon the service as his duty, the latter as his right. Still the lady repelled both, and ordered post-horses with the steadiness of a Roman matron. At length she gave way; for women are loveliest when they bend; and, turning to the baronet, pronounced the words, "Sir Thomas, I will not disappoint you."

Her hearer absolutely started back in astonishment: he attempted to utter his thanks for the honour, but the "Amen stuck in his throat."—"Your zeal, your friendship, your

honourable delicacy, all have compelled me to yield. I had at first been inclined to leave my daughter's disobedience to be its own punishment; but a mother *will* have feelings"—here she paused, and applied her handkerchief to her eyes—"and rash as my unfortunate Julia is, she must not be lost to society without an effort to save her."

The circle were loud in their approbation, Sir Thomas alone was silent. The moment was critical, and it was not overlooked. "Sir Thomas," said the lady, offering him her hand with her most confiding air, "I have not less feeling for you than for myself on this occasion. Your generous attachment, your honourable sentiments, your rank in life, deserve the amplest return; and my daughter can only require a moment of her calmer reason to do them justice."

A servant now entered, to say that the Baronet's equipage was ready. "It strikes me, madam," said the lover, to whom the probable rencontre with Gordon seemed less and less desirable; "the thought has just occurred to me, that a pair of Bow-street officers would have a better chance of overtaking these people; or that Mr. Courtney—in short, my presence at the instant of discovery might hinder the reconciliation, or 'pon my soul, make me unpopular with the lady, the very last thing I should wish to be."

But Mrs. Courtney, who looked to the moment of recapture for making a scene, in which the baronet was to be roused into an express declaration, could not suffer him to abandon his privilege of escort; and throwing over her well-turned shoulders a shawl, and speaking a few words of condolence to her sympathizing friends and disconsolate family, she took the arm of the reluctant Sir Thomas, and sprang into the barouchet, which set off full gallop for the north road.

There were days when the sight of a post-chaise and four, rushing with winged speed along any road in the kingdom, would have raised a tumult of curiosity in the whole host of innkeepers, with their ministrant grooms and chamber-maids. But the days of wonder are past, and nothing but a balloon can put speculation in the eyes of those licensed raisers of contribution on the king's highway.

The intelligence obtained by the pursuers was of the most careless and yet of the most perplexing order. It would seem as if each inn was the centre of communication to the empire, and that roads with flying equipages upon them radiated from it to all the corners of the earth; the generation of ladies in "white dresses," and gentlemen with "dark-brown eyes, bronzed complexions, and military look," seemed to have suddenly multipli-

ed in a most extraordinary degree ; for from each inn, one or more of such pairs were declared by the proper authorities, "to have started in the course of that very morn."

The perplexity, however, had obviously a different effect upon the present travellers. Mrs. Courtney grew more distrait, and was even rapidly sinking into that neglect of appearances implied in losing her temper. On the contrary, the Baronet's good humour palpably grew with the confusion ; and when, at St. Alban's, all trace was apparently lost, his gallantry and exhilaration were raised to the highest pitch ; he ordered refreshments and a relay of horses for London, with the tone of a conqueror ; and in the intervals of his champagne, and Mrs. Courtney's declamation on undutiful daughters, menaced Gordon with the most unpardoning retribution.

The horses were put to, and the Baronet was handing his irritated fellow traveller down the steps of the inn, when one of the ostlers intimated that he had a piece of intelligence to communicate. There never was a more luckless service ; the conclusion, that it must relate to the fugitives, flashed at once across his mind, and that of the lady ; and, at the same instant, that, with an oath, he desired the fellow to go about his business, Mrs. Courtney flew upon him, and by the

magic of a guinea, extracted his whole knowledge.

It was at best but of dubious transmission, and had to be followed through a cross road, that severely tried the spirit of the horses, and the temper of the Baronet. At length, in a broken country, terminated by a heath, and dotted by clumps, and thickets of rude wood, a postchaise and four was seen. Mrs. Courtney uttered a cry of mingled wrath and exultation. The Baronet was silent as the grave. "There they are," said the lady; "their horses are evidently unable to drag them any further. Now they have disappeared." She flung down the windows, and called to the postillions to put the horses to their speed. Clumps and thickets flew behind; and at length down a gloomy lane, covered by the remnant of an ancient grove, was seen the fugitive equipage, drawn up at the door of a cottage.

Mrs. Courtney sprang from the carriage, calling on the Baronet to follow, and rushed into the house. But the whole expedition had been against his good-will, and he judged it wiser to regulate his movements by circumstances, and leave family disputes to those most interested in their arrangement. The affair was decided without him: he had scarcely arranged his cravat, and freed his dress from the dust of its travel, before

he was startled from all gentler occupation by a loud scream from the house, and the sight of a man rushing away through the copse behind.

It was unquestionable, that to pursue this fugitive would be as useless, as it would now be ungallant to leave the ladies to themselves. He bounded from the carriage, and glanced into the room. There a new wonder awaited him; for there sat Mrs. Courtney with a countenance between wonder and vexation; and opposite to her sat, in all the pathos of offended dignity, the fair, the proud, and the severe Lady Diana Prudely, who, with her Lord, had that morning honoured the bridal party in Harley street, and had eloped from his Lordship and the festivity with the gallant Colonel Champetre of the Lancers.

Her ladyship sat, like Niobe, all tears, infinitely unhappy at—being discovered; and politely outrageous at the mal-à-propos intrusion of her dearest and most hated friend. Mrs. Courtney felt that she had plunged into an *embarras*, and exerted all her ingenuity to extricate herself; but she was too far in already.

Lady Diana ranged the whole scale of sobs and upbraidings, of excuses and recriminations, detailed the total history of her Lord's neglect, and of her own unmitigated

contempt for the world's opinion, and absolutely forced the impatient confidant to sit out the storm.

But a tumult outside at length checked the visitation. The voices of Colonel Champetre and the Baronet were heard in high exchange. The Colonel had returned on seeing that his pursuer was his old turf acquaintance, of whose chivalry he had already known the extent, and of whose intrusion in the present affair, he, of course, spoke in very warlike terms. It was in vain that the Baronet protested his most profound ignorance of the matter in question, his particular regard for the Colonel, and the inviolable feeling which would prevent him, as a man of honour, from interfering with any other man of honour, in carrying off his neighbour's wife.

As the Baronet grew more pacific, the Colonel grew more sanguinary, called for his pistols, and vowed the offender's extermination, in a voice "deeper and deeper still," as the reluctant antagonist alternately retreated and made battle, argued, and approached the door. The tale of anguish and agonies within, now gave way to the recriminations without; when the door was suddenly flung open, and Mrs. Courtney, wearied with the scene, and too haughty to countenance hypocrisy, without a profitable end.

ed the Colonel to put a stop to the
ite, and the Baronet to attend her to the
age.

oman is a formidable animal, whether
war-maker or a peace-maker, and the
ite instantly fell to the ground before
stern glance and sarcastic smile of the
. The Colonel's gallantry, "of course,
d not resist a lady's command;" for there
an easy scorn gathering on Mrs. Court-
s lip, which betrayed so keen a know-
e of certain portions of his military ca-
that he felt resistance might be the
is of refreshing his memory on matters,
h he was extremely disposed to confine
small a circle as possible. He saw the
and kissed it with due humility. On the
r hand, the Baronet was glad to get out
e scrape on any simple terms, and thank-
is protecting genius from the bottom of
ever soul he had.

idy Diana, too deeply busied with her
interesting situation to think of the world
is well lost for love, had flung herself on
sofa in the most touching attitude that
l occur to her on so short a preparation,
lay "à la Cleopatre mourante;" her full
e arm bent over the scroll of the couch;
handsome cheek reposing on her full
; arm; a rich ringlet, black as the raven's
, falling over her finely-rounded and

half-exposed bosom; and a scarlet gold embroidered shawl, of measureless breadth, folded and wreathed round her Sultana figure, in all the lines of beauty.

Her Ladyship was heart-broken, dying, dead! The Colonel flew over to her, flung himself on his knee beside the sofa, adjured her to live for him, swore constancy imperishable, and was rewarded, nay, more than rewarded, by a reviving smile.

A few explanatory words cleared up the general error. The customary confusion at a fashionable bridal had suggested itself to the parties, as offering a happy cover for flight. To the Colonel's boundless astonishment the same circumstance seemed to have prompted the same conclusion in others; and he had seen, but the moment before his transfer of Lady Diana from the equipage of her abjured lord to that of her adoring lover, a youthful pair, one of whom he knew to be Gordon, executing an exactly similar manœuvre.

Another moment, however, had separated the fugitive equipages; the Colonel's flying to the North, the subaltern's flying to the South. All pursuit must now be hopeless: they were, by this time, far as the poles asunder; and the wisest thing for his most valued and admired friend, Mrs. Courtney, to do, was to return to London, and leave

those absurd young persons, who had made up their mind to abandon the advantages of her countenance and protection, to enjoy the benefit of their folly.

Mrs. Courtney wavered; vexation at being assailed, contempt for the speaker's opinion, and resentment against the runaways, held her in suspense; she walked impetuously backwards and forwards in the fragment of a flower-bed that decorated the front of the cottage, while the group kept clear of her, in somewhat of that awe with which we look upon a royal tiger ranging his cage.

But the day had already made visible progress, and further meditation must have led her journey into the night, or left her to obtrude for a lodging on the rather dubious good-will of the Colonel and his fair protégée.

In this period of suspense, the Baronet assumed a courage worthy of the crisis, and ventured to propose her return. But a chill blast whistling through the scrubbed hawthorns and meagre shrubbery round the ferme Ormée, and a sudden gathering of the clouds that gave signal of a rude night, had more effect than his eloquence; and Mrs. Courtney, without a reply, stepped into the carriage, waved her hand to the cottage pair, fiercely pronounced the word "home" to the postillions; and flinging herself back on

the seat, with her handkerchief thrown over a face burning with indignation, was, with her silent companion, conveyed at full speed over common, through village, and by brake and bushy dell, towards London.

The prognostics of the lowering skies, the only promises never broken in England, became rapidly fulfilled. Wild bursts of rain, drenched the laced liveries; whirls of wind filling the vista with falling leaves, flung the light carriage from side to side; thunder began to growl, and now and then a livid flash shot across the twilight, and shewed some drenched peasant hiding under a tree, or some startled traveller, bent to his horse's neck, and muffled to the eyes, rushing by.

The night fell at once; the carriage still swept along, to the growing alarm of the Baronet; but the lady, who had yet uttered no syllable, seemed determined to keep her resolution of silence. The flash of a gas light at length showed that they had reached the environs of London, and at the same moment showed a man mounting his horse at the door of the inn, over which a lamp displayed the stately sign of the Green Dragon.

The lady and her companion exclaimed together "Gordon!" The postillions were ordered to draw up; but the horseman had already gone at full gallop into the darkness, and the innkeeper could tell no more of him,

than that he seemed in remarkable haste, and by no means in the most easy temper; that his horse was a first-rate roadster; that he had made out the shape of a pistol under his surtout; and that on the whole he thought him as like a highwayman as any of the profession that he had seen for a long while.

To Mrs. Courtney's further and eager interrogatories, Boniface, in his prudence, declined making any very distinct answer. He did not make it his business to inquire much into the business of his guests—he liked to have as little as he could to do with the lawyers, who were always taking advantage of a man's word; and, in short, he added, with a laugh at the point, he did not relish having much to do with any bar, but the bar of the Green Dragon.

The examination of this unwilling witness was therefore dropped; fresh horses were put to; for Boniface, tardy as he was to answer interrogatories, had already contrived to convince the postillions, by a species of argument understood up to the very foot of the throne, that fresh horses were indispensable; and the bowing landlord closed the door; assuring the travellers, that the horse-patrol had cleared the road.

The carriage began once more to dash along through wind and rain, the nucleus of

a whirl of mud and water ; lamps gradually thickened on the eye ; the sky gradually assumed more and more the dingy red of a distant conflagration ; trim houses, with twinkling tapers, shining through the jealousies and curtains of bedchambers, gradually formed a more unbroken line along the road, till at length the pavement rattled under the wheels, and they were in London.

CHAPTER XV.

Sorrow breaks seasons and reposing hours,
Makes the night morning, and the noon-tide night.
Shakespeare.

VAUGHAN remained at home during the rest of this anxious day, engaged in the bustle of preparation for leaving town. His open defiance of the Baronet might be supposed likely to be productive of consequences ; and his mind wandered among his acquaintances to find what is politely called a friend, or, in other words, a gentleman who would stand by and see him kill or be killed in the most approved manner.

The difficulty of having a friend at command is one of the old experiences of life

and our lover and combatant examined his whole catalogue without success. Bondstreet became a desert to him; and the round world showed him no face worthy of the emergency.

Gordon would have been the man, but for the double reason, that the quarrel touched himself, and that if he had been as friendly as Pylades, he had now more interesting affairs on his hands. Courtney was out of the question, as already the champion of the enemy. Mordaunt was bold, good-natured, and willing to serve any man in any way; but the matter, in Mordaunt's hands, would be in the hands of half the town at once; and besides, he was gone on the wings of the wind, and would be now as difficult to catch.

In the meantime, no *cartel* had arrived from the Baronet; and ignorant of the circumstances which had occupied the chevalier of Mrs. Courtney, he formed his determination for the next day, and opening his desk, wrote letters to the few persons who, on the face of the earth, felt interested about him—his uncle, his mother, and his mistress.

The material of all was alike; manly determination of vigour in his new pursuit; natural regrets for the necessity of parting; and prayers and hopes for the time when, difficulties overcome, and mountains and seas repelling him no more, he should return to

lighten all their anxieties, and be happy without fear of change.

The letter to his mother contained his wish that she should take Miss Greville under her roof, as one who might yet be entitled to share such hospitality as he could give.

The letter to Catherine contained an intimation of this request, and a picture of the mildness, generosity, and dignity of her whom she was henceforward to look upon as a mother.

The night had now advanced ; but he felt no inclination to sleep. He walked to the window, and gazed upon the stars, which shone in their glory ; he paced the room in deep and yet wandering meditations ; he again took up his book, a popular volume ; but the vividness of knightly adventure, and the magnificence of baronial castles, had palled upon his nervous and excited spirit. He took up his pen, and his thoughts insensibly strayed into verse. Catherine's parting present lay upon his table, and was his Muse :—

THE REMEMBRANCE.

Come to my heart, thou pledge of love !
And while with life its pulses move,
In absence, pestil, far or near,
Come to my heart, and rest thee there !

My days of youth are gone and past,
 My manhood's hour is overcast ;
 My later destiny may have
 A wanderer' life, a stranger's grave ;
 But whether eyes of love shall weep
 Where thy pale master's relics sleep ;
 Or whether on the wave or plain,
 This bosom shall forget its pain ;
 Yet where I rove, or where I fall,
 To me thou shalt be all in all.

Come to my heart ! When thou art nigh,
 The parting hour is on mine eye ;
 I see the chesnut ringlets rolled
 Round the bright forehead's Grecian mould ;
 The ruby lip, the penciled brow,
 The cheek's delicious April glow,
 The smile, a sweet and sunny beam
 Upon life's melancholy stream ;
 The glance of soul, pure, splendid, high—
 Till all the vision wanders by,
 Like angels to their brighter sphere ;
 And leaves me lone and darkling here !

CHAPTER XVI.

And banished I am if but from thee.
 Go, speak not to me ; even now be gone.
 Oh, go not yet ; even thus two friends condemned,
 Embrace and kiss, and take ten thousand leaves,
 Loth'er a hundred times to part than die ;
 Yet now farewell, and farewell life with thee.
Shakespeare.

VAUGHAN rose from a succession of harassing dreams—he had strayed through in-

terminable forests, and hung over precipices unfathomable ; had swept along the ocean and had toiled over the desert ; had seen shapes of beauty that all wore the face of his fair mistress, and had seen them wasted away on sudden storms.

When he awoke, the hour was late ; and the noises of the world were thick and busy about him. Still no intimation from the Baronet had arrived ; and the young soldier already keen to a sense of the " world's dreary laugh," found himself under the necessity of making his tardy adversary feel the hazard of provoking a quarrel. He at length recollected an acquaintance, with whom he had to transact some business, on his first plunging into that sea of troubles and pleasures the capital. This gentleman, a retired officer, lived in Hertfordshire ; and Vaughan set out in one of the stages to communicate his whole burning spirit to the veteran.

Major Brandreth's cottage was perfectly known to every official about the coach ; and on Vaughan's reaching the cross-road that led to it, he set forward on foot, deeply furnished with directions how to pass the by-paths and defiles of this bosky dell : but his thoughts were busied about other things than land-marks, and he was soon involved in remediless perplexity.

The hawthorn hedge that was to lead him

along within sight of the very farm, seemed to have been erased from the fair face of nature ; and the finger-posts, turnstiles, and all other customary aids of bewildered humanity, seemed to have shifted their places, or to have been whirled away by unaliced prepense.

He, at last, found himself at the entrance of a grove, which promised some approach to better things. He paused for a direction, with only the result of convincing himself, at once, that the evening was rapidly coming on, and that he had completely lost his way.

No cottage rose in the distance with its white-washed walls and noisy children to woo him to inquiry ; no lingering haymaker, with his face doubly flushed by the day's labour and the evening's excess, crossed his path to puzzle him with the easy joke and rich patois of the sister isle ; no milkmaid, smit with sudden love for the haymaker, leaned upon gate or stile, beguiling the countless moments of his coming, by singing some rustic canzonet, or picking up poppies that vied in scarlet with her own cheeks, yet could give no "sweet oblivious antidote" to her perturbed soul ; no ancient beggar sauntered along the path, counting the gains of to-day, and resting on chance and a cunning tongue for the products of to-morrow ; not even a dog barked : all nature seemed to

have conspired to leave him to himself; and, with a determination worthy of one whose life was to be adventure, he plunged into the little obscure and tangled path that wound away under the umbrage of oak, pine, and elm, spreading like night above.

Twenty miles from London is not the natural location for a wilderness, nor is it likely that Vaughan would have been irrecoverably lost; yet he might have been compelled to make his choice between the shelter of a tree and the open sky for his couch, but for a sudden light that flashed from what he thought the centre of a gypsy's, bandit's, or smuggler's cave; then, the bosom of an impenetrable thicket; then, and finally, the door of a cottage.

Here was hope, but the path was still a problem; and he had scarcely solved it, and knocked at the door, when he heard a voice within ordering it to be barred; and an old domestic informed him, from a sort of loop-hole above, that there was not a living soul in the house.

This intelligence however militated so strongly against his personal convictions, that he knocked again; and loudly repeated his entreaty for information of the road. A consultation was evidently held within; and he heard a voice, the tones of which struck him, desiring that "the gentleman should be put on his way."

The door was now about to be opened ; bar and bolt were gradually giving ground, when he felt himself suddenly seized by a man who had just sprung the hedge, and who demanded his business in a tone of high authority. Vaughan turned round, and was preparing to make fierce resistance, when a lamp just brought to the door threw its glare on both faces, and they at once pronounced, "Vaughan!" "Gordon!"

The story was now clear. Gordon, instead of flying with his bride to the North, where pursuit would naturally have turned, had nestled her here in a cottage belonging to a fashionable friend. The marriage, which had been by banns, in a remote church, had been solemnized a week before ; and the day of Lady Lovemore's wedding had offered the opportunity which they had sought on every day of the seven preceding. The appearance of a man summoning the house to surrender, naturally filled the mind of the young husband, who, at that moment, had rode up the path on his return from London, with fear of discovery ; and Gordon would have, at that moment, defied an army.

The violence was now altogether of another character. His friend was forced into the house. Julia, blushing and beautiful, came forwards to welcome him with mingled wonder and hospitality. Supper was ordered ;

a bed put in requisition for the unexpected guest; and while the master of the mansion withdrew to get rid of his boots, and the other incumbrances of travel, Vaughan and his pretty cousin, prettier than ever, were left alone to tell the history of all that had happened in the world of their relatives.

Those who take a cottage by its name would have found themselves surprised by the arrangements of the little saloon in which the conversation was pursued. The mantelpiece, of Parian marble, surmounted with the ormolu and alabaster pendule; the carpet into which the foot sank, as if into a bed of roses; the cabinet mosaicked with marble and gems of every vein and value; the Greek sofa; the Etruscan vase; the exquisite French bookcase, with its curtains drawn back by the hands of Muse and Grace, and filled with morocco ranges of popular Italian, French and English poetry; the classic bust; the purple silk window draperies, all seemed to belong to some foreign *boudoir*. Still it was a cottage, and there are five hundred rich and *recherchés* to be found in the possession of men, whose fathers were content with six days of darkness, dinginess, and suffocation in the courts and lanes of London, to be cheered for one by open sunshine, Sunda dust, and the sight of the stage-coaches.

Julia's story was simple. She had no

been a favourite of her mother ; with whom she had, from time to time, ventured to differ in opinion on the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious matrimony. A succession of men of large fortune and irregular lives, equally notorious, had been speculated upon by the industrious parent, and unceremoniously discountenanced by the improvident daughter. This produced recrimination and irritability of the usual family kinds, and Julia's life grew sufficiently trying for her spirits. She rapidly faded, and a physician pronounced sentence of exile on her, to the fresh air and quiet household of an old relative at some distance from town.

There, and she told this part of her story with a bended head, and something between tenderness and jest, she had accidentally met with Gordon, who had thought proper, not having, as she said, the fear of Mrs. Courtney before his eyes, to propose that she should take the desperate chances of the world with him. Gordon was nothing, or worse than nothing, a younger son, and a subaltern in a marching regiment. *Voilà tout.*

She was reluctant, and told him that he must be undone ; he was intractable, and said, that as he must in one way or another, he should prefer being undone in his own way. "In short," said Julia, laughing, "my dear cousin, it is my advice to all prudent,

hawking mothers, not to send their daught
to fresh air and kind old grand-aunts. C
try walks, thatched cottages, solitude,
subalterns, will be before their eyes;
after those, Baronets and Peers, in
rooms and *conversazioni*, will be found
tremely ineffectual restoratives to com
rationality.

“A few months of country discipline
returned me to Harley Street, with the
of health; and then my persecutions re
menced with tenfold activity. Two or t
worthless old men, who, I suppose, coul
nobody else to have them, honoured me
their applications, duly forwarded thr
the channel of matrimonial diplomacy.
mother. I had now an additional re
and I refused with additional decisive
Gordon was, on the other hand, perpet
talking despair, and looking despair,
almost began to think that the man was
ous, and that his telling me I should ha
life to answer for might turn out a si
truth. Marriage, which has, I suppose
many a Wise man out of the world, he
wise enough to imagine, was the only
to keep a foolish one in it. A private
riage was his courageous proposal; fo
well knew that Mrs. Courtney would
rather, like Shylock, seen her Jessica ‘h
ed at her foot,’ than seen her the wife of

living personage without a title and ten thousand a-year.

"At last the crisis came. A venerable Duke, eminent for a long career of vice and vileness, had been seen exerting the last energies of his opera-glass in paying his distant devoirs to my charms. I was suddenly closeted in a high family council upon his proposals. I was there told, that nothing but madness could hesitate a moment at his Grace's most magnificent and honourable offer; that I now had in my hands the exaltation of my family, a splendid establishment for myself, place and provision for every soul that bore our name, and the most sublime opportunity of exciting the general rivalry, envy, admiration, and vexation of the whole fashionable world. I listened, was unconvinced, and next morning walked out, met Gordon, and was married."

Vaughan's tale in return was composed of such matters as are already known to the reader; and it was soon interrupted by the return of Gordon, who announced supper, and led the way to it in another apartment decorated still more opulently than the *salon*. The little meal was served with elegance, and enlivened by the happy animation of Julia and the manly good-humour of her husband. Vaughan's sadness of spirit insensibly gave way to the simple joy of the

scene ; and perhaps even the thoughts of the woman he loved, and of the distant period when he might hope to realize such an hope that now and then stole over him, gave deeper and more delicious colouring to enjoyment.

On Julia's retiring, he commenced his explanation of the adventure that had brought him to disturb the lovers, and renewed inquiries for the undiscoverable Major.

Gordon laughed. "Think no more of Majors, my dear fellow," said he ; "I can tell your whole story by instinct ; or, if not, by the first authority, my own, of course. I have heard of your generous defence of me, and of the insolence of that coxcomb Baron before I was an hour here, from a friend who had remained at Mrs. Courtney's *déjeuné* and set pursuit upon a wrong track, if pursuit should be made. He was the owner of a cottage, which he is rich and fantastic enough to have turned into a fairy palace, as you may see. More knowing in the art and mystery of elopement than myself, I have been indebted to him, not merely for a lodging, but for the idea of leaving the Gretna road behind, and hiding in this unsuspected spot until some newer atrocity shall occur to make ours be forgotten.

"My friend was loud in praise of your terposition, and as he seemed to think

something personal might result, you will forgive me, Vaughan, for my conceiving it essential that I should take the affair into my own hands. I left Julia on some excuse, returned to town, and sent a demand to Fox-hall for an apology. I then ascertained that he had left town for the North full speed, with Mrs. Courtney for his companion; and the talkers were divided in the idea whether he was to be honoured with the hand of the detected daughter or the loving mother. Bets to no trifling amount were soon depending, and the clubs were in high amusement upon the subject. I had taken it for granted, that the point would not be settled within a week, and was returning from town, when I saw, in a passing carriage, the Baronet and the lady returning. It was then too late to interrupt them, and I pursued my way. But this morning I was again in London, had a sulky answer from the Baronet, who was un-luckily soured by the ridicule thrown upon his expedition, and was, of course, forced to go through the regular steps of the affair."

Vaughan started from his seat. "Is it possible? What will be thought of me, but that I have evaded—Gordon, I cannot forgive you!" he exclaimed.—"Yes," said his host, "you must; for I cannot now afford to lose any of my friends. You can serve me still. As to your character, it stands clear

in the opinion of every man of honour. The Baronet was unwise enough to resist all application to his sense of justice ; so his less acute senses were necessarily appealed to ; and, in consequence, he has carried off a bullet in his left shoulder down to Yorkshire ; and will, it is to be presumed, be more cautious of his eloquence for some time to come."

The narrative, however the safety of his friend might have gratified the listener, did not satisfy his scruples. His brow darkened ; and he rose to withdraw. Gordon caught his hand ; and with a look suddenly changed from its light and cheerful expression, said, " You must not be offended with my anticipating you ; or if you are, you must forgive me on the ground of having troubles enough to bear without the loss of your esteem. I have a service for you." He spoke in a suppressed tone. " Julia may yet want the kindness of a man of honour, and a relative. I had heard some days ago, that my regiment was likely to be ordered to the Peninsula. This was one cause of the precipitation of my marriage. To-day, when in town, I received the order to join. It is at Portsmouth ; and in a few days I must leave this spot."

He paced the room, " How I shall break the news to Julia ! under heaven I don't

know. Her sensibility ; her separation from her family ; her unprovided, unprotected state ! Madman that I was, not to have left her to the shelter even of her mother's roof, in confidence of my truth and regard !”

He clasped his hands together, and stood in a deep and bitter anxiety, which his friend felt too real and too sacred for idle consolation. Both were silent for awhile. At length Vaughan, with difficulty, turned the topic to his own destination, and demanded the young soldier's advice upon his project of volunteering into the army. Gordon's generous spirit forgot his own sorrows in the perplexities of his friend ; and before they parted for the night, they had both grown calm, had discussed their mutual prospects, and had pledged themselves to manly and mutual services.

CHAPTER XVII.

Come, sit by me, Amanthis,—here are woods
Covering the forky and time-beaten hills,
Like golden canopies, beneath whose leaves
We'll lie like shepherds. Hard by is a fount
That runs with living crystal, at whose brim
We'll cool our lips i' the summer-noon, or sleep
To its sweet murmuring music, or at eve
Reckon the living diamonds that the stars
Wake on its liquid purple.

Phineas Webb.

THE morn was fresh and fair; and the breeze, scented with the breath of a thousand buds and blooms, came wooingly through the open casement of Vaughan's chamber. He rose, and saw before him all the loveliness of the true English landscape: the rich valley beneath, with a stream that flowed like silver in the morning light; the hill, one bright sheet of verdure, studded with noble trees, and crowned with a forest; and over all, the first rich rose-colour of a summer sun-rise.

He wandered into the garden, which the taste and luxury of its master had filled with a profusion of the rarest flowers: it was extensive, and a multitude of paths covered

velvet turf, led each to some point of cape beauty, or some object of graceful statue, or vase, or fountain, almost hidden air festoons of vine and rose.

One of those paths, the most devious and darkest, guided him under a perpetual spray of fragrant and weeping blossoms to seemed an ancient shrine, of the whitest marble. Under its roof, wrought with the intricate rich and delicate tracery of Gothic architecture, stood upon a low tomb a bust, that looked like Vaughan as of exquisite beauty. It was of a female; and from the oval countenance, the long and veiling eyelash, and the sweet expression of noble thought and sensibility, appeared Spanish or Italian. The inscription was from a love poem of Mo-

Nunca de ti me acuerdo.
 Duena querida !
 Porque aquel que se acuerda,
 Supone olvido.
 Y yo en mi mente
 Tengo la imagen tuya
 Siempre presente !

Heardon found him still absorbed in the contemplation of this fine memorial, and trying to catch its beauty with his pencil. But to enquire into its history, he could obtain no answer, than that the owner of the statue had lived long abroad, and had been

engaged in some unhappy affairs, which drove him first from the Continent, and then almost from any willing intercourse with society even at home. That he was generous, noble-minded, and sensitive in his early years; but had from disappointment grown fantastic, capricious, and contemptuous of mankind. "To me," said Gordon, "he has been unremittingly friendly; and I believe I am now almost the only one of his earlier host of friends whom he does not shun and scorn. But he preserves his secrets with the strange and rigid delight of one fond of suffering; and nothing but the necessity of the moment could, I am persuaded, have induced him to allow of an intrusion within his walls. But come, Julia waits for our return, and pines to shew her dexterity in presiding at a country breakfast-table."

They returned; and the hours flew rapidly on, till Vaughan rose to take his leave. Julia, softened by recollection, shed many a gentle tear while she charged him with messages to her sisters, and a long and supplicating letter to her mother. Gordon accompanied his friend through the bushy and blossomed lanes which had bewildered him in the twilight of the evening before, but which in the brighter day looked all picturesque and florid beauty. They reached the high road, the horn of the stage echoed at a dis-

tance, the stage itself at length appeared, tottering on the ridge of the hill that seemed to shut out this pastoral valley from the world: it came on, sliding down the narrow descent, sometimes lost among the bordering elms, sometimes starting up from the hollow of the declivity, till it reached the foot of the rising ground on which they stood, and began slowly toiling upwards with its huge and wavering pile of passengers and baggage.

There was now no time for converse. Gordon had already explained his views for Julia in his absence from England; and Vaughan had fervently pledged himself to esteem and serve her as his sister. Their parting words were dictated by the same strong impulse, and were alike: "If I fall, remember Julia."—"If I fall, remember Catherine." They pressed each other's hands, and parted.

Next morning, Vaughan was on his way to Portsmouth. He left London without regret, or with but one regret; and prepared for the new life that lay before him with the vividness and vigour of his nature. The humble rank in which he was about to enter on his profession almost operated as a stimulant to his spirit, and he made many secret determinations that, let his rank be what it might, he would make it entitled to honour.

Yet he was ill at ease, and the slight and

wandering conversation of a stage-coach was not attractive enough to induce him to forego the pictures, "pleasant yet mournful," that his fancy was drawing of the past and the future. With something of the vagueness yet the lingering delight of a dream, he called up in succession the scenes and persons that he loved. He saw Catherine, sheltered in his mother's cottage, exempt from persecution, and with that countenance of fond yet lofty beauty that he thought the world could not match, gazing on his picture, or sending her soul after him in the thoughts of all-but wedded love. He saw his gentle and admirable parent soothing her as a daughter, and living on the hope of his return.

Then the image of Julia, the pretty, the animated Julia, looking like another Euphrosyne, rose before him; he saw her wandering through her romantic shades, hanging on her husband's arm, fixing her brilliant eyes on his, and listening with sportive delight to his language of love. He saw Gordon's brow grow grave, and heard his tongue falter as he attempted to tell Julia the tidings of his destination. The picture was painful, but he went on drawing it with a strange interest; he saw Julia's quick eye caught by the change, he saw her very lip turn white, and a tear ready to fall—when he was relieved and the whole vision broken up by the stoppage of the coach, for dinner.

Here two of the passengers took their departure, and Vaughan was left to pursue his journey with a pale and intelligent-looking man of middle age, who like himself had not uttered a syllable since his entering the coach. They now mutually felt the awkwardness of silence, and commenced a conversation.

The stranger soon gratified his companion in a high degree. He was familiar with a large extent of general literature, and had added to his knowledge the grace of travel. He had been from his youth a wanderer in pursuit of all that was curious or characteristic in every region of the earth. Pyramids and pagodas, the Mandarin, and the priest of Tibet, the Mussulman on the banks of the Indus, of the Nile, or of the Bosphorus, were familiar with him "as household names;" he had slept on snow at the summit of the Himmaleh, and had luxuriated under the grape clusters and orange blooms of a Greek Isle.

But his last traverse had been through the Peninsula. On this part of his narrative Vaughan hung with an anxious ear. The stranger described it with the detail of exact knowledge, and with the spirit of natural feeling; the people, as brave, yet capricious in their courage; as high-minded in their opposition to the French, yet as prejudiced

in their connexion with heretical England but the country, a perpetual succession of that was noble, rich, and picturesque in landscape. Vaughan began to chide the sl hours and the leagues of rolling billow, the lay between him and this land of beauty and fame.

The coach had now tardily made its way up Portsdown hill, and the whole shore lay on his eye. The evening was fine, and the sun lay "pillowing his chin upon a west wave." The batteries, the sea, the fleet transports with their convoy, the Isle of Wight, lying green as an emerald beyond, all filled the young adventurer with a sensation of high and almost oppressive delight. The stranger took his hand, and looking at his enthusiastic countenance with a smile said, "My dear young soldier, cherish thy feelings; keep them pure, strong, and natural, as they are at this moment." Vaughan checked himself, as if he had been detected. "No, Sir, there is no shame in those things," added the stranger; "and Heaven grant that neither man nor—" he paused—"woman may chill them." The coach had now arrived at the hotel; and the stranger, promising him letters for his regiment, gave him his card, and bade him good-bye. Vaughan looked on the card, and saw the name of Colonel Windham! the abjured lover of his cousin Clementina.

CHAPTER XVIII.

See his brave fleet,

With silken streamers the young Phœbus fanning
Play upon your fancies; and in them behold
Upon the hempen tackle ship-boys climbing :
Hear the shrill whistle, which doth order give
To sounds confused ; behold the threaten sails
Borne with the invisible and creeping winds
Draw the huge bottoms through the furrowed sea,
Breasting the lofty surge.

Shakspeare.

THE day of embarkation, but for the mingled and painful feelings with which all were preparing to depart, would have been one of intense interest to Vaughan, who had never before witnessed a similar scene. The unclouded rays of a meridian sun sparkling on the white foam of the waves as they dashed on the shore with a monotonous but yet not unpleasant sound ; the concourse of spectators, some attracted by idle curiosity alone, others too much occupied with their own griefs to take any notice of the multitude by whom they were surrounded ; hands extended, and handkerchiefs waving, gentle and half-uttered farewells drowned by loud shouts and seamen's boisterous voices,—the proud vessels rushing along,—the anxiety of the friends of the sol-

diers that nothing should be forgotten for the comfort of those who so soon might need only a mound of earth to cover them ; all presented a new and not unwelcome subject of contemplation to Vaughan. Yet the common but natural reflection, how few were destined to return, how many of those left behind had taken their last look, sank into his mind, and a circumstance of the moment renewed but too strongly his own regrets.

There was one officer, a lieutenant in Vaughan's regiment, for whom he felt deeply moved. His young wife had accompanied him even to the shore. Their only child was in its father's arms. The child, fascinated by the scene, was all delight. The beating of the drums, the scarlet of the soldiers, the epaulettes, the swords, the plumed caps, the flags streaming from the masts of the vessels, were all so many objects of wonder to the child's eye. He clapped his little hands with transport ; but when the final moment came, and the father was about to resign him,—when the boy found that he was to be borne away, he clung round his neck with a shriek as heart-rending as the agony of a deeper sorrow. There is something in the innocent anguish of an infant that wrings the soul. The weeping mother took it struggling from the father's arms, but still lingered on the shore. A tear started to the soldier's

eye; the most indifferent of the spectators gazed on the scene with an air of painful interest; there was even a momentary silence. —“This parting should have taken place at home, Sir,” said the colonel of the regiment; “these things are unwise, and not for the public eye. A soldier should suffer in secret.” The young lieutenant made no reply. He might perhaps have said, with Macduff, “He has no children;” but he contented himself with casting a last look of tender regret upon his wife and child, and a somewhat reproachful glance at his colonel; then putting his foot firmly on the deck of the vessel, he folded his arms, and walked apart from the group. In a few minutes after the vessel was under weigh.

The passengers consisted chiefly of officers and soldiers sent to the assistance of the Spanish patriots. It was the commencement of the memorable year 1812, the time when all Europe, agitated by the struggles of Spain, looked to the issue of the contest with a mixture of hope and fear.

The conversation soon became mixed and animated. Soldiers are a light-hearted and thoughtless race; painful recollections or dark anticipations seldom interfere to check their mirth. The present is all that they can reckon upon, and the present they are fully disposed to enjoy. They talked over

the Spanish cause, its laurels, its prize-money, its promotion. Vaughan witnessed their careless hilarity with surprise. "You are a young soldier," said one of them, advancing and disturbing his reverie by a friendly tap on the shoulder; "you are new to these matters,—your thoughts are with England and English friends; but come rouse yourself, and be one of us. Should you have the luck to return, a second parting will have lost half its regrets; and, if not why then, you know, neither head nor heart will ever ache again. That is my way of reasoning."

Roused by the appeal, he endeavoured to shake off the weight which oppressed him, and take a more lively interest in the revelries round him.

There was one yet more abstracted than himself, who trod the deck with a slow step and by whom the mirth and mingled voices of the various groupes seemed either unheard or unheeded; but he was not an Englishman who, while encountering danger himself, was yet cheered with the consciousness that should he return, it would not be to find his own hearth desolate,—the home of his infancy plundered or destroyed by the hand of the invader. He was a native of that unhappy country whose sufferings now formed the theme of every tongue. His eye had lost

nothing of its fire, but a shade of melancholy and deep thought had softened the strong and originally harsh lineaments of his countenance.

By his side stood a young female, dressed in the costume of her country, closely veiled, and apparently as much the prey of reflection as himself. They spoke but seldom,—and the few words which they addressed to each other, uttered in their native tongue, were unintelligible to Vaughan's ear; but their residence in England had given them the advantage over him. He soon ascertained that they could speak English with tolerable ease, and on this discovery he addressed some slight and unimportant questions as an opening to intercourse.

The Spaniard at first repelled these advances with a frigid politeness not very favourable to further acquaintance; but soon perceiving that the questions were not dictated by mere curiosity, and naturally touched by the expression of intelligence and sympathy in the inquirer's countenance, he gradually became more communicative.

He was, he hinted, of rank and distinction in his own country. He had seen the mansion of his forefathers razed to the ground by the hands of the enemy. He had fled to England for shelter, not for his own, but for his sister's sake, in the hope that the storm

might blow over, and they might yet return in safety. But the hope was vain; he could no longer remain to listen to details which froze his blood, and felt himself compelled by feeling and honour to return and join in the retribution of his country. He was not bred to the profession of arms, but he was born a Spaniard; a soldier by inclination, a patriot from his birth, he felt it to be every man's duty, at such a crisis, to lend the assistance of his arm.

"But the lady," said Vaughan, with a look of commiseration towards the slender form that hung helplessly on his arm, yet listened with breathless interest to every word that fell from her brother's lips.

"My sister," said the Spaniard, proudly, "will not want a defender while there is one Spaniard left in our unhappy land. She feels as she ought to do, and knows no fear; Spanish women do not disturb or unman the hearts of their friends by idle lamentation; they incite them to deeds of honour, they talk to them of conquest, they hand them the sword and the musket. My sister has the spirit of her country, and would prefer braving even death to longer exile; she has even made a vow before the altar never to give her hand but to one who has fought for Spain. Is it not true, Leonora?" "It is true," said Leonora, slightly blushing, and half raising

her veil, she discovered a countenance of singular and animated beauty. "It is true," she repeated; "but that vow was uttered in secret." A glance from her brother caused the veil to be instantly lowered.

Little farther communication passed between them during the remainder of the voyage, which the serenity of the weather protracted somewhat more than usual; the Spaniards chiefly remaining below; Vaughan indulging himself by inhaling the soft but partial breezes which gently agitated the ocean, or contemplating the various changes of sea and sky, the morning splendours, and the midnight heavens, studded with innumerable stars, multiplied in the clear expanse of waters.

But when the vessel, early on a lovely morning, at length cast anchor in the harbour of Lisbon, a mutual feeling of admiration and delight brought them again in contact. All with one spirit rushed eagerly on deck to catch the first glimpse of the city, then seen in all its magnificence, and claiming the homage of every eye.

The hand of the spoiler had not yet visited this splendid city; the shrubs and aromatic plants produced by her genial climate still decorated the balconies of the children of luxury; the lower classes still pursued their busy and active employments; the streets

were thronged with passengers of all ranks, dressed in their showy and picturesque costumes ; numerous boats plying near the shore surrounded the vessels ; a few beggars, stretched along the banks, extending their hands to the strangers, alone interrupted the harmony of the view,—but even these were enjoying the luxury of the summer sun and the gaiety around them.

Vaughan, enchanted with the prospect, almost forgot the cause for which he was landing on those rich shores,—or, at least, all the revolting images connected with that cause, war, and famine, and pestilence. To defend such a country from insult and invasion appeared a duty equally pleasing as imperious, a feeling the natural offspring of the enthusiasm of the moment.

“ Oh, Spain ! oh, my country ! ” said Leonora, springing with the elasticity of youth to the very edge of the vessel, “ why did I quit you ? ” She forgot that it was even for life she fled, and that the moment of security was not yet come. She saw only the smiling land before her,—she breathed only the perfume of her own delicious groves,—her cheek was fanned by the air she loved.

The chief part of Vaughan’s comrades had served in previous campaigns, and to them the scene had lost the charm of novelty,—but his unchecked language roused the

Spaniard from a long and moody silence, and he turned round to express, in a more courteous accent than usual, how much his national pride had been gratified by witnessing it. "But Spain is a finer country still," he observed; "and you must not exhaust all your admiration upon Lisbon. I should be happy to explore it with you, but that I leave the city early to-morrow, for the distant spot which I once called my own,—waste and ruin as it is, I shall not be happy till I am there once more. Englishman," he said, taking his hand, and leading him away, "you have interested me,—but the fate of war may forbid that I shall ever meet you again. That poor girl," (pointing to his sister) "she is happy just now. It is a happiness unlikely to last,—but I would not distress her by forebodings. Chance, at some future period, may throw her in your way alone and unprotected. Should you meet her at any time in danger or distress, will you defend or console her as your own honourable heart may dictate. You will remember this face."—He approached her, and with his own hand the proud Spaniard raised Leonora's veil.

CHAPTER XIX.

He saw a sight of beauty, warlike towers,
Pale convent roofs, o'er-topping kingly bowers,
Hills crowning hills, on which the moonlight lay,
In solemn brightness, but a milder day.

Phineas Webb.

For some time after his landing, Vaughan enjoyed only the amusements of soldiership. His joining the regiment as a volunteer had been no impediment to the friendly and generous intercourse of his comrades; a commission which followed him out, and which he received with the higher gratification as it was procured by Gordon's interest, and sent with a letter from Julia, as her "present to her gallant cousin," soon removed any feeling of inferiority; and all around him was made for the excitement and indulgence of his active and vivid sensibility.

Lisbon has long become familiar to the British traveller; but, at that moment, it was seen, as it will perhaps never be seen again. The war had filled the capital with an influx of the opulent and various population of the provinces; the contrast of colours, features and costumes; the bold and vigorous countenance of the natives of the Trallos Montes

contrasted with the rich olive hue and delicate features of the Creole from the South American possessions of Portugal, and those again placed beside the bronzed skin, the fiery eye, and the haughty brow of the descendant of the old Moorish blood that had once lorded it over the land ; the infinite mingling of dresses native and foreign, the turbans and caps, and purple shawls, and embroidered mantles ; the monkish habits mingled with the uniforms of the Portuguese and British soldiery ; all formed a moving picture of incessant liveliness, variety, and captivation.

To a stranger, the churches, in all countries of the Continent, are among the first objects of curiosity, as they are among the most accessible. Vaughan often strayed into those lofty and magnificent temples, and, under the influence of twilight, made deeper and more lovely by the hues streaming through windows covered with the heraldry of kings and the forms of saints, in all the glorious colourings of sky and gem ; listened to the service chaunted by the monks in some distant chapel.

At other times, on coming from the theatre or the ball-room, he has taken one of the boats that ply constantly on the Tagus, and fallen down the river to enjoy the delicious night of the south ; and with his solitary

boatman wandered away, listening to the sounds of festivity as they decayed along the shore; or caught by some sweet voice singing to the harp in one of the verandas that so often lie open to the breeze from the vineyards of the Alentejo; or, as all sank in the distance, lying on his oars to gaze upon the city in the moonlight, almost realizing the vision of an oriental tale, the immense piles of noble building, rising crescent over crescent from the curve of the shore, a host of marble palaces, convents, and public edifices, lifting their white fronts and embattled roofs and gilded spires to the summit of the hill; while the moon, in the full and powerful splendour of the southern sky, covered this mighty theatre, to which the Colosseum were but a toy, with a flood of silver.

At other times, on some of the delicious evenings of the season, he would mount his horse, and ride away from the tumult and confusion of the city, to indulge himself with the spectacle of the groups of peasants mingling in the national dance with all the spirit and gaiety of their country.

War had not yet extended its ravages to the spot which they had inhabited from their birth; and, till actually compelled to seek safety by flight, they did not suffer gloomy anticipations to interfere with their

little fêtes, those smiling holidays endeared to them by custom, and which climate and inclination alike fitted them to enjoy.

The peasants of both Spain and Portugal seem musical by nature. From the humblest and most unpromising roof, the sounds of the guitar, the mandolin, or the castanets, often attract the ear of the stranger; and those innocent recreations relieve them from having recourse to the idle and worthless occupations with which other lands contrive to dissipate their hours of leisure. Their movements in the dance, though untaught and unstudied, are yet striking, and not without grace; and their very dress, so well calculated to display their attitudes and figures, adds greatly to the picturesque of the whole.

Sometimes, tempted by the fineness of the day, he urged his rambles to a length that surprised himself; but the infinite variety of objects prevented the way from appearing tedious; or if at any time he was wearied, the door of the cottage was always open to invite him to enter, and partake of the peasant's fare; or did he arrive at a spot where those hospitable dwellings became more thinly scattered, he was secure of finding the luxury of a vineyard to invite him to refreshment and repose.

Sometimes his thoughts or his dreams wandered to England; but it was to wish that

the Continent was alike free to all; and that it was in his power to transport those whom he most loved and valued far away from the moody atmosphere of their own skies to that land of sunshine and flowers, which had already begun to spread its invigorating influence over his own frame.

Continual exercise under a genial sky can scarcely fail to produce an inspiring effect upon the health and spirits. Vaughan's heart, buoyant with life, soon resisted all temptations to be sad, though his situation was far from one of unmixed happiness, or brilliant prospect. If there was any thing that he sighed for at that moment, it was to be engaged in more active service. He could hardly hope for promotion while stretched at his ease in the shelter of some overhanging wood or glowing orange grove, or wandering a spectator through the streets of a festive city.

The narrowness of his circumstances, too, pressed upon his feelings; but there were luxuries and amusements open to him in the aspect of nature, and of those he largely partook. No where is the aristocracy of rank so rigidly preserved as in the army. He was sometimes disconcerted to perceive a coxcomb, whose manners and narrow ideas betrayed his mind, and whom money alone had evidently raised, claiming deference as

his superior officer; but he felt that those might be but temporary vexations. It is the happy nature of youth to rise superior to circumstances; and he contemplated the time as not distant, when no man could have the paltry privilege of looking down upon his place in society. On his uncle's promises he placed the firmest reliance. He knew him to be, though stern, honourable; warm in his affections, though harsh in his manners; and though perhaps easy to offend, yet not implacable. He burned to hear the trumpet; the order to march would have been the most welcome sound to his ear; the sight of the enemy's camp the most pleasing spectacle that could have met his eye. He longed for an opportunity of distinguishing himself. The time was even nearer than he had anticipated.

He had written to England, as soon as he found that his regiment was likely to be detained at least some weeks, in the hope of obtaining speedy intelligence from home. He had received but one letter, containing little besides the assurance of the health of his friends; and was anxiously awaiting a second, when a small packet was put into his hands from his uncle.

But if his surprise at recognising the handwriting was great, it was much increased by an examination of the contents. In a word,

it contained a second order for the immediate purchase of a lieutenancy. His measure of delight was full. His first thought was, that his uncle had become acquainted with the whole transaction ; and that a just resentment towards Philip had prompted this kindness towards himself. But on a more minute perusal of the letter, he could trace no allusion to any such discovery. His uncle expressed himself pleased that no whining and boyish methods had been employed by him to regain his favour ; that having once confessed his error, he had prepared himself to suffer its consequences, with a fortitude and spirit honourable to his character ; and that he had shown firmness enough to adhere to the resolution he had adopted, with the true and proper feeling of an independent mind.

It was evident that the old man had satisfied his sense of justice by inflicting a temporary punishment, as an evidence of his displeasure, but that his heart had pleaded for him in secret. Vaughan's heart bounded ; his sanguine anticipations appeared realized. In the eye of youth, how bright a picture is sometimes painted by the pencil of Hope. What might he not expect from the man whose strong affection had borne down every barrier, had overleaped the narrow and deep-rooted prejudices which had been the

spring of his actions for so many years, had given such an air of asperity to his manners, and completely concealed from the world the workings of his heart. And this was the man whom the world had so long branded as a selfish misanthrope, whom neither the sufferings of the many, nor the gratitude of the few, could stimulate to liberality.

He doubted not from this moment that all his difficulties were at an end; he saw himself at once the child of fortune—the heir of his uncle—the hope and comfort of his parent—the husband of Catherine! Elated with the sketch which his imagination had drawn, he wrote, on the spur of the moment, such a reply as a full and grateful heart could alone dictate; he vowed to accept the gift only as a stimulus to exertion; and ventured to predict, with ardent sincerity, that the moment was fast approaching which would prove him worthy of a reward so generously bestowed.

CHAPTER XX.

The birds chaunt melody on every bush,
The snake lies rolled in the cheerful sun,
The green leaves quiver with the cooling wind,
And make a chequered shadow on the ground.
Under their sweet shade, comrades, let us sit ;
While martial sounds, and sweet melodious birds,
Be unto us as is a nurse's song.

Shakespeare.

RELIEVED from the dejection which had cast a shade over every scene, Vaughan began to look around with renewed interest, and he found as much amusement in studying the character of the people, as the curiosities of the country. His hours of solitude he devoted to the language ; a task which daily intercourse with the inhabitants rendered comparatively light. He was fond of ascertaining from his own experience the popular feeling, and was cheered by perceiving the same spirit in all ranks, an undeviating resolution to defend the country to the last breath.

Sometimes, in company with his brother officers, he lounged away an evening at the grates of the various convents ; but this was a less welcome subject of contemplation. It

was painful to him to see what minds were here destroyed by seclusion from the world.

Some of the sisters had intelligent and expressive countenances even in an advanced age. These walls had enclosed some of the chief beauties of Lisbon. He regretted to witness the cold indifference which had crept over their minds with regard to the affairs of life. They listened with childish apathy to the details of their country's sufferings. The calamities of which they heard, had not reached their narrow cells; their occupations, if such they could be called, were pursued with the same monotony which had marked their course for years. Of distance, never having exceeded their own narrow bounds, they could scarcely form an idea; and a messenger was hardly ever despatched on an errand from the convent, that, let the distance be what it might, they did not murmur at his delay.

Who can be led to imagine, that the fittest preparation for a better world is to take no interest in the concerns of this? To fly from a life which was destined to exercise and purify the heart, is at best but any unworthy refuge from trial. Some of those unfortunate beings had indeed been sacrificed to the tyranny or ambition of their parents; but many more were the victims of a blind and mistaken zeal; and some few had,

through early disappointment, voluntarily retired from the world. Books, the natural resource of solitude, with the exception those on religious subjects, appeared seldom sought as a recreation among those whose amusements must necessarily be so limited.

Vaughan having ventured to express surprise on the subject, and to point out the many hidden stores of intellectual pleasures were yet open to their perusal, one of them, with a deep sigh, alleged a somewhat natural reason in excuse, which perhaps echoed sentiments of half the community. "What avails it," said the fair nun, "to read of scenes in which we must never mingle, of events in which we can have no share, of pleasures that we are forbidden to know, of places and people that it can never be our fortune to see? It would serve only to heighten an unavailing regret, and bring those thoughts back to earth, which we have vowed to devote to heaven. Yet I do read sometimes," she said, with a sigh; "her one book," and she drew out a small volume "which I have read again and again. I will lend it to you, Signor, and you shall tell me whether it speaks truth. But," and she seemed somewhat to repent her promise. Vaughan stretched out his hand for the book. "You must promise to me by the Holy Virgin, that you will return it by the same hand."

to-morrow, for it has been my companion for many a tedious day, and I will not lose it but with life.”—“I will swear to you,” said Vaughan, smiling, “by the honour of a soldier, and that is one on which you ought to rely.”—“I know not,” said the Portuguese, raising her hand, by a sudden movement, to her marble forehead, and starting back with a look of deep agitation, “that is one which I mistrust strangely; but no matter, be it so; I will confide in you:” and crossing her hands devoutly on her breast, while a tear found its way even to her slender fingers, she retired.

“Poor thing,” said an old nun, who yet lingered at the grating, and had not quite forgotten the feelings of her early years, “poor thing, who that knows her little history, can wonder at the doubt she expressed. That book was given to her by a young officer of your country, and it has filled her head with dreams of romance of which she never thought before. He lingered many an hour about this grate, and made fine speeches and sonnets on her beauty, of which she was never conscious till then. His regiment was ordered suddenly away; yet he left her with a light heart and a laughing eye, vowing that she should see or hear of him at no very distant day, which day has never come: and my mind misgives me

strangely but he is one of those who will tell the same tale to every handsome damsel that crosses his path, and think no more of Sister Clara; though she has not yet finished her noviciate, and might leave the convent to-morrow. Of a certainty, Signor, he is either dead or false-hearted; and, be it which it may, 'tis the same to her, for her heart is breaking."

Vaughan, moved by the recital, gave the remainder of the evening to a perusal of the little book which had been thus placed in his hands. It was a tale all of love; it told of vows broken, conventual vows disregarded, of convent walls scaled, of faith plighted, and hearts exchanged. "It was unmanly, it was cruel, to raise such images before her eyes, and then leave her to the gloom and the sorrows which were here so faithfully portrayed," thought Vaughan; "and yet, perhaps, this very individual is roving the world at this moment unconscious of the mischief he has wrought, and might be but a sample of the many who tread the earth inflicting cureless wounds."

He related the little story which he had just heard, and was astonished at the laugh which followed his recital. "Ay, ay, we have heard something of this before," said one of his military auditors; "and I think I could even name the man to whom you al-

lude; but you see this business in too young a light. He, if I mistake not, has made more conquests, or victims, if you will have it, than this nun; but is it a man's fault that he is a showy fellow with a plausible tongue?—and, if the fair ones of Spain and Portugal choose to be sentimental and susceptible, must he wear a mask and be dumb. Ha! ha! ha! However, don't ask his name; we are all sworn to keep the secret, lest some black-browed Spanish brother or bravo should extinguish one of the best-natured fellows in the service." A new burst of laughter followed this speech, and Vaughan broke through the circle.

On that evening an order was received for the first brigade, of which Vaughan's regiment was one, to march on the following morning. While his heart beat with the prospect before him, he did not forget his promise to the young nun. He had but just time to return the volume which she prized so highly, and to console her by venturing to hope that chance might throw its giver in his way, in which case he should not fail to remind him of the Convent of the Estrella. Clara thanked him with a blush of gratitude; but, as she waved her hand at parting, her tears betrayed that hope was gone.

Next morn, at day-break, his first glance was towards the convent walls,—and in a

hour after he was on his way to Spain. The bustle of departure, the confusion of sounds around him, the animation which lighted every countenance, produced a restorative effect upon his spirits. Soldiers have too little leisure for reflection, to be long the prey of painful thoughts; and Vaughan, in common with his comrades, surveyed the prospect before him with a buoyant and joyous feeling. For the first day or two, as they sailed in proud tranquillity along the Tagus, he could scarcely persuade himself that the land which they were approaching was the very dwelling of war and suffering. It looked more like the land of peace and plenty, dispensing to the stranger its superfluous luxuries.

But as they disembarked, and approached the seat of conflict, the traces of devastation became more visible. Here cottages were abandoned by the terrified inhabitants, and stripped even of their scanty furniture,—groups of peasants, with their families, were making as precipitate a retreat as the strength of the fugitives would permit,—and at one beautiful spot, where the vintage had partially commenced, baskets of clustering grapes were seen abandoned in the hurry of flight, and the labours of the husbandman left exposed to the grasp of the soldier.

At the close of a long march, their atten-

tion was one night attracted by a blaze of light, which seemed to illuminate the whole forest around. They rushed with one consent to the spot. Groups of the peasantry were assembled in a confused mass near the site of a vast conflagration. Their various habits, rendered more distinct in the hideous glare, showed them to have assembled from various provinces, but one spirit appeared to animate the whole.

They were shouting round the burning ruin with a sort of wild exultation, which the spectators for a few moments felt at loss to comprehend. Could they be rejoicing in the calamities of their country? Were they rebels? "What," cried the officers, advancing amid this strange multitude, while fragments of the blazing timber fell every moment with a tremendous crash, "have the enemy been already here? Is this their work?" "No enemy," cried a crowd of fierce voices,— "no enemy is like the man who has turned traitor to his country. This was the castle of one of our counts, one of our chief lords. Some of us here were his vassals; he has deserted us, and gone over to the French. This work is ours, the work of our revenge. Should he ever return, he shall find that his country will contain no castle for him. No child of his race shall ever tread within these walls. So perish his memory!" And

with a reiterated shout they again rushed forward, and danced round the burning pile.

The brigade halted in a plain not far from the scene of tumult, and their encampment was lighted through the night by the blaze. In the morning all was tranquil. The peasants had dispersed to their various habitations, leaving behind them no other trace of their labour of destruction than a huge blackened heap of ruins.

A glorious sun shone on the morning march; gallant anticipation beguiled the journey; and the bands of the different regiments striking up on their approach to towns and villages, summoned all the inhabitants to their windows, who greeted them with loud acclamations as they passed, and made many a heart beat with that wild exultation which no man but a soldier can fully comprehend.

At one little town, at which they halted for refreshment, less pleasurable sensations awaited them. The hospital for the troops were stationed here, and the waggons of the wounded in a late engagement, were just then entering in dreary procession. The slow and melancholy motion to which they were obliged by the pain of the sufferers, the low and dejected countenances of the invalids, the soiled and disordered uniforms formed a striking and painful contrast to

quick march, ruddy and healthful countenances, loud voices, and military array, of the advancing troops.

But in an instant every tongue was checked into silence, the offspring of respect and feeling, for their unfortunate fellow soldiers. Vaughan averted his eyes from a spectacle which, for the time, unmanned him. A transient damp was cast upon the spirits of all ; and yet, thought he, what is this but a faithful, though hurried, picture of human life,—pain and pleasure in rapid succession, one almost always the forerunner of the other. In the wan and altered countenances that passed him, he fancied that he could recognise some familiar faces,—some whom he had seen in the circle of the light of heart ; some whom he had laughed at as coxcombs, or shunned as dangerous companions. What were they now ?

Soldiership may be the source of errors, but it has its counteracting lessons ; and many a feeblér appeal to the heart and understanding has been made by the philosopher, nay, even by the preacher, than was given in the slow procession that then wound away before his eye.

CHAPTER XXI.

Oh ! the tender ties
Close twisted with the fibres of the heart !
Which broken, break them ; and drain off the soul
Of human joy, and make it pain to live.

Young.

ONE morning, as he was wandering through the streets of a small town, where his regiment was quartered, he thought he saw an officer riding by, (though the last person he should have expected to see there,) his old college friend, George Mordaunt. He turned round eagerly to ascertain the truth of his conjecture. Mordaunt, for it was indeed he, stopped at that moment, and removed his doubts by a cordial shake of the hand. "You seem surprised! Is my appearance here so very unaccountable at such a time?"—"I am indeed surprised," returned Vaughan; "your resolution must have been very suddenly taken."—"True, but do you think that no one is to be seized with the military mania but yourself. I had indeed some fair objects at home, wherewith to make a man contented in England; but man is restless by nature, and I don't pretend to be exempt from the

universal failing. But come to my quarters, where I am handsomely accommodated for the present; and we'll talk over this and other matters. You will guess," pursued Mordaunt, "that I met with some opposition. Fathers will frown, and mothers weep. I had an estate, indeed, that might have been worth looking after; but I have made up my mind that I shall return all in good time,—if not, I have a younger brother willing enough to keep up the honours of the family, and if I should chance to get knocked on the head, he will have you to thank for his promotion."

"Me!" said Vaughan, in surprise. "Yes, you," returned Mordaunt, laughing; "did you not talk over your projects eternally, and did not I listen, not till I was weary, but till you set me mad to follow your example. Who was to stay lounging at home when half the world was up in arms, and for Spain too?"—"Right, Mordaunt," said Vaughan; "it is a fine country and a fine people; the French must not get possession of it." "Right," interrupted Mordaunt; "and was it possible to sit down quietly a mere country squire, hunting and shooting for the rest of one's days, when one might be so much the better employed running down foreign game. But here, we are arrived at my billet; am I not superbly lodged?" throwing open the door of a large apartment, fitted up with un-

usual elegance. "But a week ago my couch was spread in the open air ; and a few drenching showers, which had no respect of persons, made me once or twice think of old England. My host is a genuine Don of the first feather,—and, by the taste displayed before you, you may easily perceive that a female hand has had its share in the arrangements. He has a wife and two exquisite daughters, who sing like sirens, and of whom I catch a glimpse every morning as they go to mass. I and a few of us are always welcome at the Spaniard's table, and the Donna has now and then a delightful Tertullia, of which I never omit one."

"And all this will end, I suppose, by your leaving your heart with one or all of your fair hostesses," said Vaughan, laughing. "That may happen, too," replied his friend, "though I have not yet quite determined which. And here is a mandolin belonging to one of them, which I took occasion to borrow in the hope that she might be tempted to come and look for it. I have become quite sublime on the instrument, and might set up for a wandering minstrel, should other resources fail. But now for your history ; have you nothing to relate, private or public, since your arrival in this land of adventure ? Have you come thus far untouched, escaped all wounds, outward and inward ?"

Vaughan confined his communication to the general circumstances relative to himself; yet, in speaking of Lisbon, he accidentally touched on the interest which he took in the fate of the young nun. It was still sufficiently fresh in his memory for him to have lost none of his indignation on the subject. "And now what do you think," said Vaughan, "such a fellow deserves? He has, of course, deserted this unfortunate girl." "Very possibly," said Mordaunt; "I am no judge of those matters; but this I will say, that, whatever his deserts may be, you, at least, don't seem inclined to spare him,—and, were you a priest, I certainly should not advise him to apply to you for absolution." "You treat the business lightly," said Vaughan; "but no man of conscience or honour could acquit himself under such circumstances?" "How, why do you fix your eyes upon me? What have I to do with it?"—"I don't know,—I have no right," interrupted Vaughan, a suspicion just then flashing across his mind; "but you seem irritated." "Come, come, you are not my confessor," said Mordaunt, holding out his hand; "there's no resisting your cross-examination. In short, you see the hero of the romance before you. But I believe I tell you nothing new, for I shrewdly suspect it was a piece of Clara's own intelligence."

Vaughan disclaimed the suspicion, with a sincerity that his friend found it impossible to doubt. "Well, well, I never quarrel about a matter of opinion; I am prepared to listen to a string of reproaches. Here I sit, —and now say what you will," throwing himself with an air of affected submission upon a couch at the end of the room. "No," said Vaughan, "I have none to make. I have told my tale; it is true and simple, and requires no comment. You are a man of feeling and honour." "My dear fellow, you are not fit for this world," said Mordaunt, trying to rally; "you are too romantic for me. You see a pale girl at a convent-grating, and listen to a crazy old nun, who would take advantage of your credulity, to persuade you that we are all a set of barbarians scarcely worth powder and ball."

"No, I took the liberty to judge for myself; and, if there is truth in the world, that girl loves you with a sincerity not to be questioned."

"It may be so," said Mordaunt gravely; "but I acquit myself of all design upon her heart; nor had I till this moment any suspicion that I possessed it. It was not likely that my taste should take so serious a turn, considering the innumerable obstacles between us."

"Obstacles? I see none but such as might

be easily overcome where the happiness, the life of a generous woman was at stake."

"I could name a thousand," interrupted Mordaunt. "In the first place, I have no thoughts of shackling myself thus early, nor can she have had any thoughts of matrimony; has she not voluntarily devoted herself to a conventual life?"

"Recollect," said his friend, with strong emphasis, "her youth and inexperience. Till she saw you, she might have resigned the world without reluctance. Her heart had as yet been unawakened. It was you who first taught her to feel, and, permit me to add, to suffer."

"Confound it," said Mordaunt, impatiently rising, "my regiment was ordered off; could I command it to stay? An intercourse of this nature must necessarily be short-lived. Such things were not intended to last for ever."

"No, but they were precisely such as might be remembered for ever."

There was a transient pause. Mordaunt paced the room evidently disconcerted, and Vaughan was silent. At length, approaching the door, he said, "Mordaunt, I must leave you; I have intruded upon you too long. I have undertaken a hopeless cause; and this unhappy girl must be hurried to her grave." "The grave! no," said Mordaunt, starting, "I am not so culpable. I have not

the vanity to think myself capable of leaving an impression on any woman's feelings."

"No, but you had the vanity to endeavour to make it; and believe me, Mordaunt, that the affections of an innocent heart are not things to be lightly prized,—nor is he guiltless who, having sought them, throws them by."

"Well, what would you have me do? What can I do?" said Mordaunt, more than half subdued; "I might have been thoughtless in the first instance; but at present I am not my own master—I cannot desert—duty first, and love afterwards."

"No, but your pen is free," said the persevering Vaughan; "you can write to her, and prevent her from taking the vows. If you reject my counsel, Mordaunt, the image of that girl, pale and dying under your neglect, will yet come across you, and sadden the best hours of your existence."

"You are a philosopher, Vaughan, and should have been a preacher; but you have done more than I could have given you credit for. In ten minutes you have found Clara a husband, and me a touch of the heart-ach,—both of which an hour ago, in my short-sighted wisdom, appeared two as unlikely events as could possibly happen. But I shall set your heart at ease, and write the fatal letter instantly. We may soon have

a stirring day, and I won't answer for the continuance of a good resolution."

CHAPTER XXII.

"I saw them plumed for battle, heard their shouts
Making the high heavens ring, to which their spears
Lent a new morn. The mountain's rugged side
Looked like an Indian tapestry, silver shot,
And vein'd with hues of the rainbow. Banners waved,
And the shrill trumpet's cries from hill to hill
Gave gallant cheering." *Phineas Webb.*

THE stirring day was nearer even than the young soldiers conjectured. In the evening, on their return from a walk, rendered delicious by the cool fragrance of the air from the gardens that covered the country to the foot of the hills, they found the British in the full bustle of preparation. The roads were covered with baggage and cavalry, and the streets of the town were crowded with the troops falling into the line of march, and the staff riding about, and giving orders. The evening was glorious, the sun, an orb, less of gold than of living fire, broad and burning, sat on the Sierra in a splendour which they had never seen before, and which the troops looked upon as a sign of victory.

As they left the town, the bands strung up, the colours were unfurled, and they rang with the gallant tumult of the soldier. The Sierra before them rose rapidly as they approached it, and the brigade gazed on masses and pinnacles, sheeted with sunlit in a thousand shapes and hues, with a feeling of scarcely less than astonishment. As the sun sank lower, and the bases of the mountain range lost the light, they seemed embedded in a sea of melting purple; but rivulets that broke down the higher declivities, still gleaming in the sun, wore the look of streams and gushes of fire winding their way through the bold and fractured sides of the hills, till they were extinguished in the gulf below: higher still, the brow, jagged and pointed in innumerable forms, was the crater of the great volcano, ruddy with smoking and lurid splendour; and, above all, the mighty shaft of granite, white as snow, in the full blaze of the sun, shot its spire into the clouds, with the intense light of a living volcanic flame.

The troops continued their march during the night, through precipices and pinnacles by wild depths, where a false step would have been destruction, and on ridges, beneath which the clouds hung. The moon was in her wane; but her light, in that region of pure air, and under the serene tempera-

of the climate, was yet enough to shew their way along this dangerous and diversified tract. But the stars shone out with a blue brilliancy, new to eyes that had till now seen them only from the plain. The old poetic images of lamps and gems of heaven were too feeble for their glory. Their orbs were larger, their brightness broader and more dazzling, their hue of a deeper and more celestial sapphire, than could be imaged by the common similitudes of earth; and Vaughan, as he gazed upon them, thought involuntarily of powers and forms of being beyond the grave, of the immensity of the future, and of those awful and illustrious provinces and kingdoms of space, to which the spirits of the multitude, now grown silent in their sight, might before another day be hastening.

It was midnight, when an officer of the staff rode up to the regiment, telling them to get under arms, and advance immediately towards a point on which the last beam of the moon was falling; that the enemy were near, and that it was necessary to take them by surprise.

The troops started from the ground with martial good will, and in a few moments the brigade began descending the precipices. The march was conducted with caution, but the tread of the soldiery, the guns crashing

down the stony road, and the cries of the muleteers, which no threats could restrain, must have soon betrayed their movements to the vigilant and active enemy. But fortune still favoured them; the sky, hitherto so serene, became clouded, as they came within hearing of the French videttes; the wind rose, and suddenly blew in gusts of such force, that the soldiery were compelled to cling to the rocks and pines. The moonlight was extinguished at once, and the thunder began to roll like the cannon of a distant battle.

Still they pursued their march in utter darkness, and bewildered among the intricacies of the valley, or lighted only by the sulphureous bursts that sprang and quivered along the ridges above, or covered in a blue and crackling sheet of fire the columns, and then relapsed in an instant into darkness inconceivable.

The rain began to pour in torrents, the ground was deluged, and a glance at the mountain by one of the flashes, shewed it white, with sudden cataracts rushing down after them. To take shelter was impossible, to advance became at every step more hazardous; all points of direction had been lost: it was at last resolved to halt upon the spot till morning. The lightning had ceased, and tenfold darkness covered earth and sky,

in one broad burst, that seemed like a flagration of the general atmosphere, rose from the depth of the clouds, and covered the whole horizon. They were already at the foot of the hill on which the French had encamped for the night: the disposition was displayed before them, the French commanding the entrance of the village, the British picquets at the foot of the ascent, the French videttes on the neighbouring heights. All was silent, as if man had no business to single his little powers with the overwhelming grandeur and might of the war of nature.

The glare sank, and in the next moment troops rushed on in columns, with an incoming huzza. The position was attacked flank, front and rear, at once; the enemy offered a vigorous resistance, and the face of the hill was in a blaze with cannon and musketry. The French were commanded by Duguid, a gallant soldier and a favourite of Napoleon; he had been surprised, but he strove to sustain his character.

The conflict became close and destructive; the entrance to the village had been barricaded, the houses were looted, and a heavy fire was poured from every roof, fence, and wall. But the British bayonet was irresistible. The barricades were rapidly broken, amidst cheers, and the roar of min-

gled artillery and thunder. Vaughan felt himself buoyed up with a lofty and maddening animation; he plunged into the blaze of the musquetry without a consciousness of hazard; all was a bold, feverish, almost joyous, tumult of sensations; a new life seemed to have been poured into his frame, and first of the first, and loudest of the loud, he flung himself into the midst of desperate encounter.

His captain had been wounded on ascending the hill; he was now in command of the company; and the thought of distinction, and of those whom he had left at home, doubly inflamed him. A French battalion had rallied, and was gradually repelling some British platoons that had ventured too far, and were now keeping up a scattered fire. As Vaughan turned into the street, he saw the platoons broken and forced to take shelter under the portico of a convent. Their officer had fallen in the centre of the way, and a French grenadier rushed from the ranks to bayonet him.—Vaughan uttered a cry, sprang forwards, and grasped the Frenchman; the soldiery on both sides ceased firing, through fear of killing either. But the conflict was brief. The musquet was broken between the strugglers, but the Frenchman drew his sabre and aimed a blow which might have extinguished Vaughan's joys and

sorrows for ever. The wounded officer gave a sudden scream, as he saw it lifted up; Vaughan sprang aside, it grazed his arm, and it was returned in the Frenchman's heart. The British gave a roar of triumph, and drove the battalion before them down the street, firing and charging till its remnant threw down their arms at the last barricade.

Fatigued and bleeding, yet with a salient and elevated feeling, such as he had never till that hour experienced, Vaughan led back his prisoners through the place of battle; the dead and dying still lay thickly around, and his first search was for the officer whom he had saved. He found him under the portico to which the wounded had been drawn. The officer was Mordaunt!

The action was now over: a few scattered parties of the enemy continued firing from the Sierra de Montanches, along which they were making their escape, pursued by the light infantry. But even this was soon at an end; the British success was complete. Nearly three battalions, with their staff, the Prince d'Aremberg, and a demi-brigade of artillery, were the results of this night's enterprise, one of the most brilliant of a war abounding in genius and valour.

cing, and yet more the masks by which the features of both were disguised, banished so favourable an impression, and he prepared himself to watch their movements, as a matter of military duty.

A little distant from the place where he stood, lay the body of a young Spaniard, who had volunteered with the brigade the night before. A moment's observation convinced Vaughan that their object was plunder, and that the body of the young officer was marked for their first spoil. "This," said one of them, "was a man of rank; I have had some tokens of his generosity before now. His pockets were always well lined, and I'll engage, even on such a day as this, they are not empty." Bending over the body, he began his search. A faint groan from the lips of the Spaniard betrayed symptoms of returning life. "What, not yet dead?" said the plunderer, drawing his knife, "then I must despatch you at once, to make sure work of it." "Villain," cried Vaughan, bursting from the place of his concealment, "would you add murder to plunder? if so, be assured, your crime shall not be unrevenged. Your dress shows you to be Spaniards. You have disgraced the name. Soldiers by day, robbers by night! To-morrow shall call you to account for this deed." The fellow started, the knife fell from his hand, but speedily

recovering himself, "We are two to one," returned he, "Englishman, you had better let us alone." "One of you is my certain mark," said Vaughan, drawing, at the same time, his sword, and pointing it at the throat of the nearest. "And I swear, that the first that raises his hand dies." The robbers stood appalled for an instant. "He'll rouse the whole picket upon us," said the ruffian, shrinking from Vaughan's grasp, and turning to his comrade, but the other had already fled, and, with a fierce execration, he also took to his heels. "And you, young hero," said Vaughan, bending over the Spaniard, who had again relapsed into total insensibility; "is there a hope that the life which I have at least preserved from the dagger may yet be spared?"

The vital warmth was not fled, his heart beat, though feebly. He raised the head, and supported it against his own breast. He opened his vest for air, and discovered, suspended from his neck, the portrait of a beautiful and youthful female. He had an indistinct recollection of having seen the face before, but the imperfect light prevented his more minute survey. One heart at least might chance to be widowed and broken by this brave stranger's death. "No, he must not die." A glimmering light from a cottage, at no great distance, gave him the hope of

help. He roused its inhabitants, an ancient peasant and his wife, and implored of them to accompany him instantly. The honest peasant arose, and followed him, while his wife busied herself in lighting a fire, and preparing a pallet for the wounded man, and fell on her knees at the foot of her bed, to offer up a prayer to the Holy Virgin, without which she affirmed all human aid would be unavailing.

No time was to be lost. The ruffians might return. A few minutes brought them to the place where the body of the Spaniard still lay. Having conveyed him to the cottage, the next step was to awaken the surgeon of the regiment, and Vaughan, having left him in such hands, returned towards the town, with a satisfied conscience, but a heavy heart, to seek an hour's rest; when the sight of a veiled female figure, advancing sadly and timidly towards the fields, once more arrested his steps. Not thinking herself observed, she raised her veil, and displayed the countenance which but a moment before had floated across his recollection.

It was the face of Leonora, for he knew her by no other name, the Spanish girl from whom, with her brother, he had last parted on the day of his landing. He hesitated to address her till he should ascertain her purpose.

She passed, evidently without perceiving him. He saw her wander, with a wild gesture, over the bodies of the slain. Sometimes, with her slender fingers, she parted the blood-stained locks which concealed the convulsed and disfigured features; sometimes she shrank with a cry of horror from the fearful spectacle, yet still she pursued her mournful search. "The Holy Virgin be praised," said she, at last, clasping her hands, and raising her rosary to her lips, "he is not amongst these! I should have known him even in death."

The remembrance of his promise to her brother on the deck of the vessel, that should he see her at some future period in danger or distress, he would console or protect her, as his own heart might dictate, urged him to step forth from his concealment, and make himself known to her. "Lady," he said, "time or more interesting events may have effaced me from your memory. But I have not forgotten that countenance. My promise to your brother was not lightly given. Is it in my power to serve you?"

The lady started in terror, for a moment, at an appeal so unexpected, but his concluding words re-assured her. She thanked him for the offer of his services, and recognised him as her brother's friend. But her thoughts were wandering and disturbed; she

hesitated. Vaughan renewed his inquiry, and added his hope, that no dear friend was the object of her search ; that her brother—"My brother," sighed the mourner, raising her eyes to heaven ! "*There* alone," pointing to the blue expanse above them, "can I hope to meet him. He fell bravely in a late engagement." And a few tears, a tribute to her earlier grief, found their way down her pale cheeks.

Her history from that period was brief. Deprived of her sole protector, she had taken shelter in a convent, during those fearful days. It was her lover whom she sought on that plain. She was pledged to become his bride. The convent she had chosen was not far from the field. "We could hear in our cells," said the trembling narrator, "the tumult of the battle. Every shot seemed to my perturbed fancy aimed at the heart I loved. I passed a day of agony. At one moment I was praying in dismay for his life ; at the next I was prepared to rush headlong from my place of refuge, disdaining a safety which I could not share with him. The din of arms has long ceased. He must have been captured or slain ; he could not be unfaithful. The miseries of suspense became intolerable. I stole forth beneath the night, to learn my fate—I can but die."

Vaughan, dubious whether to rejoice or

grieve, pointed with deep feeling to the dim light in the distant cottage. He could scarcely doubt that the object of her anxiety was the stranger. He simply intimated to her, that he had seen a wounded Spaniard borne there. "He yet lives," said Vaughan, despondingly, willing to prepare her for the interview, and thinking it almost cruel to encourage her to hope.

In a deep silence, which might almost have been taken for resignation, but which was, in fact, the stupor of despair, she suffered him to conduct her to the door of the cottage; where he forbore to intrude upon a grief which he could scarcely hope to mitigate. A shriek of recognition convinced him his conjecture was true, and shrinking hastily from the wild and bitter lamentations which followed, he returned to his quarters, to taste of a broken and unrefreshing slumber.

CHAPTER XXIV.

It is Jealousy's peculiar nature,
To swell small things to great, nay out of nought
To conjure much, and then to lose its reason
Amid the hideous phantoms it has form'd.

Young.

WITH the morning's light he awoke. His first thought was of the Spaniard, and he rose hastily to make some inquiry respecting him; but his limbs, powerless and inactive, tottered beneath him; his cheek feverish and his forehead throbbing with pain, he sank again, overcome by a weariness that no effort of mind or body had vigour to subdue. The surgeon whom he had summoned to the assistance of the wounded man on the preceding evening, coming to seek him at that moment, and perceiving his feebleness, ordered him to his bed, with the promise that, if he would keep himself quiet for a day or two, he would bring him regular intelligence of the strangers, in whom he had expressed so strong an interest.

But in a day or two Vaughan was no longer in a state to listen to his communication. One of those fevers incidental to the climate-

and which have so often desolated the fertile provinces of Spain, appeared to be making fearful ravages on his frame.

To a long period of total insensibility delirium succeeded; and the sufferings of the mind were yet more painful to witness than those of the wasted body. The pain inseparable from illness diseased his bewildered imagination, which converted it into the agonies of some mortal wound. He fancied himself extended on the field of battle in the heat of the engagement. In vain he essayed to rise,—he felt the horses of the enemy trampling over him.

Then, with all the inconsistency of a dream, those whom he loved were transported as by magic to his side. The hand of Catherine was supporting his head and binding up his wounds. He was almost happy for a moment,—when, on a sudden, the vision assumed a more disastrous form. A shot pierced the faithful breast against which he was leaning for support. She sank at his feet, fixing her dying eyes upon him with an expression which, even in the after-days of returning health, often floated upon his memory; in that hour of utter wretchedness hope appeared lost to him for ever. Then he called upon her name with a voice of wild lamentation, till exhausted he sank again into a state of forgetfulness.

In those restless slumbers, which every one has at times experienced, or that yet more painful alienation of mind inseparable from violent disease, the intellect appears to acquire a singular and tormenting faculty of conjuring up horrors which would never enter the waking mind; the ravings of a delirious fancy are the last extremity of pain.

After hovering long on the confines of the grave, he opened his eyes, to find Mordaunt seated by his side, with a look of deep anxiety, and holding his wasted hand between his own with affectionate solicitude. "Are you there?" said Vaughan, in a feeble voice, "why did you not awake me before; my dreams have been fearful." "Thank Heaven, you know me again," was his friend's reply; "think no more of the past. Since dreams have ceased to torment you, you must think only of daylight and fresh air, and get strength as fast as you can."

It was some days before Vaughan could collect his thoughts sufficiently to dwell long upon any subject; but the first object of his inquiry was the wounded Spaniard. The surgeon, whom he questioned on the subject, informed him that he had been summoned by other duties to a village at a distance, but that he had confided him to skilful and careful hands; and had the satisfaction to hear, upon his return, that the cure of his wounds

had been sufficiently effected to permit him to quit the cottage, that he had rewarded all who had any share in his restoration with a liberality that betrayed his rank,—that the lady had visited him daily with unremitting assiduity, and that he was called Don Ferdinand de Velasquez.—But this was the extent of his information. Whether he was an inhabitant of that town or its neighbourhood was a point of which he was completely ignorant ; but he was gone, and had not been seen since.

Vaughan felt chagrined at thus having lost all clue to the further knowledge of persons about whom he felt a more than common interest ; yet he could not but anticipate the *denouement* of the adventure in the speedy union of the lovers. He consoled himself with the reflection, that, as the army was seldom stationary, it was more than probable that chance might again effect their meeting.

The returning hue of health had indeed scarcely visited his cheek, when orders to quit their present station were received ; and the animating hope of being again called upon to distinguish himself, and obtaining those honours that were the natural object of a soldier's ambition, banished every other idea.

This hope, however, was for a time unsustained after their arrival at ———, the

place of their destination. No memorable movement took place. The officers of the various regiments there appeared, for a time to have little else to do than to pursue amusement, a few skirmishes alone excepted, which scarcely interfered with the leisure of the quarters.

"You must come with me to-night, Vaughan," said Mordaunt one day, "Count Alameda gives a grand fête at his villa, in honour of his lady's birth-day. I have an invitation, and can introduce you. The count's villa is but a trifling distance from the town and, even were it further, you will see enough to repay you for the trouble of going." Accordingly, at the appointed hour, the two friends set off for the scene of festivity.

The *coup-d'œil* was foreign and striking the profusion of variegated lamps, suspended from the handsome balconies which surrounded the mansion,—the statues, which crowned the turrets of the lofty edifice shown in all their marble beauty by the brilliancy of the illumination beneath,—the concourse of superb equipages seen driving in rapid succession up the long and winding avenues, all presented an association, approaching almost to royal splendour.

The portico by which the guests entered was a noble orangery,—and the breath of the odoriferous shrubs and flowers on every

side produced as delightful an effect on the sense, as their tasteful arrangement on the eye. In the interior, the extensive baronial hall, set apart for the dancers, was fitted up, so as to convey the perfect idea of a vineyard in its most glorious season ; clusters of real grapes entwined around the marble pillars, and trained so as to cover the whole ceiling, hung in tempting bunches within the reach of every guest, and offered the most grateful refreshment that thirst could desire ; while various seats, placed at intervals, and decorated with flowers and aromatic plants, so as to form artificial bowers, were almost too luxurious not to invite the stranger to repose, and temporary forgetfulness, even amid the tumult of such a scene.

The hall opened to a spacious lawn, where a display of fire-works of surpassing beauty was the first object of attraction ; rockets that seemed to pierce the sky, stars, comets, meteors, all that ingenious fancy could devise, some so constructed as to burst at once into the form of wheat-sheaves, and which, bearing the bright yellow of the harvest, rendered the illusion yet more complete,—the whole ending with a boundless blaze of various light, which rendered every object around as distinct as day, and even gave a transient but perfect view of the town in the distance, the inhabitants of which were only discern-

ed crowding their windows to obtain a sight of this most brilliant spectacle.

The fire-works over, the guests returned to the ball-room. Amongst the most animated of the group was one whom Vaughan could scarcely fail to recognise, notwithstanding the striking difference in her appearance ; it was Leonora,—no longer the pale and dejected being he had last seen her, with her hair floating in wild disorder over her heart-broken features ; but joy in every tone and look, her whole dress arranged with studied elegance, her ebon locks braided upon her arched forehead, and sparkling with jewels, and her still more sparkling eye, with the caprice of conscious beauty, darting round without fixing its gaze on any object for a moment at a time.

Vaughan surveyed this young and vivid being with a feeling of delight. "This," said he proudly within himself,—“this is my work. I have made her what she is ; I was the means of rescuing her from misery, perhaps from death ; she owes her present happiness to me.”—He approached, and made himself known to her. She held out her hand with a frank familiarity which charmed him. She told him that Velasquez was now perfectly restored to health, that she was become his wife, and that this happy change in her destiny appeared to gild

every thing around her; that she even looked forward to a speedy and glorious termination of her country's sufferings. She spoke with enthusiasm of the zeal which England had displayed in the cause, and flattered him by many a grateful tribute to his unexampled valour.

She was interrupted by the approach of Velasquez, who twice pronounced her name unheard. The third time it was uttered loudly, and in a tone which convinced her, that she must instantly obey the summons.

Leading her apart from the general group, but not far from the spot where Vaughan still remained, and, unconscious of his acquaintance with the language, the Spaniard made his remarks freely in his hearing. "I was not aware, Leonora," he said, "that you had any acquaintance with those foreigners,"—the word foreigner was uttered in almost a tone of contempt. "I thought you told me that, when you took up your abode in England,—and you may remember that I was averse to the scheme at the time,—you lived in total retirement?"

"And I told you true, dear Velasquez," said Leonora gently; "my acquaintance with this officer is but of recent date." "For so slight an acquaintance, the meeting appears to have been productive of vast pleasure on both sides," said Velasquez,

with a bitter smile. "You are too impatient, Velasquez," said the lady, somewhat distressed; "I have met this officer twice before; but it was under circumstances, the recollection of which might give an interest to our present meeting. This is not the moment for such explanation—the when, the how, the where, we may have when we are alone. Can you look kindly on me, Velasquez; I cannot bear to see that frown upon your brow." "I cannot smile, Leonora; I am not in the mood just now; I cannot school my features like your fair-faced Englishman."

Vaughan overheard this short dialogue with a feeling of deep regret. It was evident that the mind of the Spaniard was the seat of prejudices, amongst which national pride, and a no small proportion of jealousy were not the least conspicuous. He hesitated for a moment whether to seek or shun the acquaintance of a man, into whose character he had obtained so unfavourable insight. He at length determined upon the former; candour might do much. He might have laid a claim upon his gratitude by revealing the extent of his obligation towards himself,—but this would have been his resource.

Approaching where the young pair were standing in gloomy silence; and affecti-

entire ignorance of what had passed, he presented his card. "I had the pleasure, Don Ferdinand," he said, "of embarking for Lisbon in the same vessel with the Donna Leonora. Her brother recommended her to my protection. She has since found a fitter and better protector, and can never stand in need of my services; yet I hope, with your permission, for the pleasure of improving that acquaintance."

The Spaniard, at all times to the highest degree well bred, and perhaps, too, in some measure, won by his frankness of manner, accepted his card, at the same time exchanging his own; then bowing politely, but somewhat haughtily, he drew Leonora's arm within his own, and retired, his fine countenance exhibiting something of the struggle which still disturbed his mind.

CHAPTER XXV.

Look round how Providence bestows alike
Sunshine and rain to bless the fruitful year
On different nations, all of different faiths.
And though by several names and titles worshipped,
Heaven takes the various tribute of their praise,
Since all agree to own, at least to mean
One best, one greatest, only Lord of all.

Rowe.

HAVING made this preliminary step, Vaughan thought it inconsistent with what was due to himself to make any further advances; but chance, by throwing them constantly in the way of each other, seemed to have decreed, that the acquaintance thus begun was not to end here. Velasquez, a man of cultivated habits, and graceful pursuits, was perhaps the companion whom he would have selected, to beguile those hours which were not claimed by his military duties; but that most repulsive of all failings which even their first interview had discovered in the Spaniard's character—Pride, seemed to present a formidable barrier to all familiar and generous intercourse.

Velasquez, a Roman Catholic, and peculiarly bigotted to his own tenets, did not

scruple to express an unjustifiable disdain for all other opinions. As a soldier, every laurel which decked the British appeared plucked from the national coronet of Spain. He would have trusted her cause to the prowess of her single arm rather than call in the aid of a foreign power. With a man of such feelings and opinions, it was evident to Vaughan that he could scarcely hope for friendship; yet there was nothing like open hostility between them. Vaughan's natural generosity of heart, together with an interest which he could scarcely help feeling in one, whose life he had undoubtedly been the means of preserving, banished all appearance of distrust on his part; while, on the other hand, the habitual dignity of the Spaniard's character prompted him to struggle against his suspicions.

Vaughan was sometimes encouraged to hope that his union with a high-souled and gentle being might be productive of conciliation; but he often trembled for the future fate of the woman, who had trusted her happiness to the power of so stern a guardian.

Leonora failed not to perceive, with deep pain, even in these early days of her wedded life, the lamentable failings which obscured her husband's brighter qualities; but with all her good sense and strong feeling, she

yet adopted the very worst possible method for removing the evil. Though Vaughan had always preserved a strict silence on his personal affairs, yet Leonora, either from report or observation, had imbibed the idea that he was ill at ease in hope and fortune. Grateful for his sympathy in her own hour of distress, she felt interested for his welfare. Her husband, a man of rank and influence, had many good offices in his power; and these her natural benevolence prompted a wish to secure for her friend.

But she had the unwise habit of her sex, of introducing her favourite subject too often, and of pressing it too ardently. Unhappily, instead of taking warning by his lowering brow, and half-uttered replies, she pleaded her cause with renewed energy. Her innocent and inexperienced heart foresaw no danger. Her love for Velasquez was of that pure and undivided nature, that the idea of its being mistrusted for a moment never once crossed her mind. A less affectionate but more cautious and worldly spirit would have reined the moody temper of Velasquez with more success. On his part, he was attached to her with a love that amounted to selfishness. The most virtuous emotions of the human heart may be indulged to a perilous excess; a word, a look of approbation, towards any human being but himself, was misery to the ear and eye of the Spaniard.

Vaughan, in the course of the campaign, had lately various opportunities of distinguishing himself. The evidences of his military merit, together with the many striking qualities which a more intimate acquaintance could not fail to discover in his character, had raised him high in the favour of his commander, and the mournful devastation which had taken place in the ranks of his regiment, had at the same time opened the way to his promotion.

These circumstances could not in the slightest degree interfere with Velasquez's views, or diminish his own share of honour, but they were still thrown into the scale of the general offence. The slightest seed of discontent, if once permitted to enter the breast, strikes root like a poisonous weed. Velasquez was nobly born; he could boast of both fame and fortune. He had youth, talent, and beauty; a lovely wife who would have given her life for his; yet in the possession of all the essentials of happiness, his anxious and irritable spirit poisoned the sources of enjoyment. Like Haman, all this availed him nothing; he still saw "Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate."

Vaughan gradually perceived the fatal rock on which Leonora's happiness was too likely to be wrecked; but to talk on a subject so delicate, so nearly concerning him-

self, and to one so partially known, was altogether impracticable; he could therefore only hope that his fears had not out-run the danger; and guiltless of all intention to offend, he consoled himself with the knowledge that Valasquez had, with all his faults, no small share of vigorous and counteracting reason.

It was, besides, a stirring time, and gave room to feelings of a more public nature. The day was probably not distant, when, again fighting side by side, and animated by one common cause, all private irritation would be buried in that one great interest, which made friends and brothers of them all.

Velasquez, among his national peculiarities, had a zeal for making converts among the English heretics, or at least for inspiring them with a high idea of his own religious tenets. The frankness of Vaughan's manners appeared to him to intimate a flexible and yielding mind; and, for the moment, forgetting the jealousy of the husband in the ardour of the missionary, he was anxious that he should be present at the more impressive of the national ceremonies. - Having heard one day that a young novice of a neighbouring convent of high birth and distinguished beauty was to take the veil on the morrow, he proposed to Vaughan, that they

should attend the rite. Vaughan, to whom a similar opportunity had not hitherto presented itself, embraced the offer.

They found the chapel of the convent thronged with spectators. The young victim herself, splendidly arrayed, stood firm under the gaze of the multitude, and evidently prepared to perform her melancholy part with fortitude. The shrines and altars were decorated with a profusion of flowers. The immediate friends and relatives of the unfortunate girl, all superbly dressed, as for the celebration of some joyous event; the boys who chaunted the anthem, dressed in spotless white, with long scarlet and embroidered sashes; the sacerdotal robes, even the books which the priests held in their hands, and which they opened at intervals to recite the prayers appointed for the day, ornamented in a style of the most costly decoration, were all evidently intended to give a magnificent and festal impression. The slow and deep tone of the music as it floated through the lofty aisles, was alone in unison with the natural feelings of the time; all else was brilliancy and animation.

He shrank with little short of pain from a display so ill suited to the occasion, while he could not forbear gazing with deep interest on the young object of it all, who, with her arms folded across her breast, her long

hair wreathing in luxuriant tresses for the last time, and her veil but partially concealing a face of sweet and touching beauty, pronounced the irrevocable vow with an unbroken voice, while she cast a mournful but firm glance on those from whose friendship and society she was about to receive the mandate of final and utter exclusion.

As they left the hall of the convent, "Senor," said Velasquez, "you will now confess, that with us religion receives its due honours; and that there is something peculiarly grand and imposing in the ceremonies of our church, calculated to produce a permanent influence on the mind; you must acknowledge its superiority to the plain and common forms adopted by your countrymen." "Excuse me," returned Vaughan, "if I venture to differ from your opinion. In pomp and pageantry, you doubtless far exceed us. Its external effect it were vain to deny; but I must doubt of its beneficial influence. It bears too direct a reference to our merely human taste for show. So much to allure the eye must distract the thoughts. Absorbed by the brilliant spectacle before us, we almost forget its origin; and feelings more sublime are lost in the contemplation of those common vanities."—"Tis well, Sir," said Velasquez, with more than his usual sternness, "I was prepared to find this the result

of your reflections; but you will at least acknowledge that we have but now witnessed no slight instance of the power of our Church. To see a young female, in all the pride of her youth and beauty, voluntarily resigning all that is supposed to render life valuable, and even in the very midst of those *common vanities*, (since they can receive no milder name.) devoting herself to its service, is it not a sublime, a splendid spectacle, one calculated to awaken the finest and loftiest feelings of our nature."

The vision of the young man rose upon Vaughan's eye, and he spoke with an increased feeling. "No, Senor," said he; "no: to see such a being abjuring all those pure and innocent pleasures which her youth was made to enjoy; to hear her renouncing all those natural and gentle ties which make the charm of existence; to see her robed for this sacrifice of death as for a bridal, was too painful a contemplation for me ever to wish to witness again. Gracious heaven! what could be the heart of the father or the mother, who had reared her from infancy to consign her to that living tomb!"

Leonora, who had listened with growing alarm for the result, at this period endeavoured to check Vaughan's earnestness by various hints, which however he failed to understand. "Had I a voice," he pursued "in

the legislation of your country, my first labour of patriotism would be the subversion of those melancholy and unnatural customs. I would throw down your convent walls. I would set these unfortunate victims of superstition free." He stopped suddenly ; in giving a loose to the generous and manly emotions of the moment, he had almost forgotten that his auditor was a Spaniard.

A glance of flame from the dark eye of Velasquez reminded him of his inadvertence. "I thank you, Senor," said he, bowing haughtily, "I thank you in the name of my countrymen, for the favourable opinion you have expressed of us and of our faith. It is for this," said he, turning angrily to Leonora, "that we foster heretics in our bosom. Openly they defend our cause, while at heart they laugh us to scorn, pervert, insult our sacred ordinances."

"You mistake me, Don Ferdinand," hastily interrupted Vaughan. "For myself, I honour the Spaniards as a nation. They are a brave people. As individuals, no man is more ready to acknowledge their merits than myself."—"Except," interrupted Velasquez, "on those points on which of all others a Spaniard prides himself the most."—"This is scarcely just, Don Ferdinand," returned Vaughan, with rising indignation, yet checked by Leonora's presence. "Till this mo-

ment I have been gratified by your friendship; but without freedom of opinion, there can be neither confidence nor friendship.”—“All friendship, Senor, such as it may have been,” said Velasquez, with increased vehemence, “is at an end between us. A Spaniard feels insulted by the slight put upon his country.” He added in a low tone, “A fitter time and place may be found.”—“Forbear, Valasquez, in mercy, forbear,” said Leonora, who had listened in silent terror, as the argument increased in warmth, “consider a moment, the Senor has reason, or, at least,” scarcely knowing what she uttered, “moderation on his side.”

“This is not a point to be decided by a woman’s judgment,” said Velasquez, doubly exasperated by her interposition, and thrusting rudely from him the gentle hand, whose pressure ought to have recalled him to a sense of his error. “It would better have become one of your birth and station, Donna Leonora, to have sided with your country and your husband in such a cause, than thus warmly to have taken up the defence of a stranger and a heretic.”—“I side with none, I take part with none,” said the trembling Leonora, her alarm deepening every instant; “I would see you friends; that is my sole object; let that end be accomplished, I care not by what means.” Then, venturing again to press his

hand, notwithstanding her first repulse, and, by a sudden movement flinging back her veil, the marble paleness of her features, and tears seen glistening in her dark eyes, tears which seldom shed possessed double value, were not without their effect.

A shade of human feeling passed across the Spaniard's haughty brow. He drew her to him, and, imprinting a kiss upon her forehead, "Leonora," he said, "you would play upon my weakness, but I was not born to be a woman's toy. There are bounds to human forbearance, and some offences which the honour of a Spaniard cannot brook."—"Then here, Don Ferdinand, we part for the *present*," said Vaughan, laying a marked emphasis on the word. "Respect and deference for the admirable lady before me, forbid my giving way to the language of feelings that ought to have been spared. Lady, I wish you all happiness; Senor Velasquez, farewell!" Leonora thanked him with a blush of gratitude. The Spaniard made a proud obeisance, and turned towards his home.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Beware

Of entrance to a quarrel ; but being in
Bear it that the opposer may be aware of thee ;
Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice,
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
Shakspeare.

VAUGHAN had been scarcely an hour in his chamber, when a note from Velasquez was put into his hand ; the challenge which it contained was no new subject of surprisc. It is the misfortune of affairs of this nature, that they are generally the work of a moment, and that the period of reflection, which might bring with it repentance, seldom comes till repentance is unavailing. In the present instance, there was more time for deliberation than usually happens. Some military duties interfered with his immediate gratification of the Spaniard's purpose ; and he could not until the third day from that on which the challenge was sent, feel himself at liberty to name the hour and place of meeting.

Nevertheless, since it appeared inevitable, Vaughan almost regretted the delay. He had met the challenger more than half way :

there was no alternative, he could not now draw back—and honour appeared to demand that the answer should be as speedy as if the meeting were appointed for the morrow. He wrote and despatched a hasty reply, intimating his intention of being punctual, and no sooner was the decision despatched, than, as many a man has done before him, he sat down to reflect upon the probable consequences.

“Was it for this that I saved his life?” he exclaimed. “Better for us both that he had never awoke from the spot on which I found him, or that we had never since met.” The thought of his friends in England, was not the least bitter amongst those that crowded on his mind. That he should fall, he felt more than half convinced. The present was not the first trial of the Spaniard’s skill. He now sat down to write such letters as it would be necessary to forward to England, in case of his death. To his mother and uncle he wrote a few brief but affectionate lines; but to Catherine he poured out every feeling of his heart in an ample and, as he deemed, satisfactory justification of his whole conduct. This he felt would be cherished as a last memorial of an unshaken affection.

His heart became so full, in the idea that he was writing to her for the last time, that he gave loose to the whole eloquence of ten-

derness, and when the sound of approaching footsteps arrested his employment, he was astonished to perceive the unusual length to which his letter had extended itself.

The intruder was the colonel of his regiment. Vaughan replied to his salutation with an air that betrayed the disorder of his mind. "You are either ill or unhappy, Vaughan," said the colonel; "have you had bad news from England?—a faithless mistress or a treacherous friend, no uncommon events in life, believe me."—"No, Sir," said Vaughan, impatiently, "nothing of the kind; I am fatigued with a long ramble in the heat of the day; the symptoms of a wearied body are often mistaken for those of a distempered mind." "But," said the colonel, half smiling, "here is plain evidence of a good two hours' work at least," pointing to the letters on the table before him. "Do you usually write epistles on this scale? One would think that you were penning your last will and testament, or, at least, the last letter that you ever intended to write.

"The last," said Vaughan, starting unconsciously at the sound; "it may be so; every man must take his chance; and, if I may trust to my own impressions, mine ——" he checked himself. "You are not well, Sir," returned the colonel gravely; "you are evidently disturbed. But this is no time for

trifling ; and, since you will not deal candidly with me, permit me to make a nearer guess at the truth," a sudden recollection just then flashing across his mind. "I might have foreseen the consequences of that intimacy. I never thought well of your acquaintance with that blackbrained Spaniard. It was evident, from the first hour of your acquaintance, that he was jealous of you. The fellow had imbibed some silly notion that you had been a former lover of his lady's, (which might have happened too,) and he was predisposed to quarrel with you on the first opportunity. However, you have other claims upon you than those of his petulance. No man can doubt your nerve." "No man shall," said Vaughan; "this business must be gone through, let what will be the result." The colonel continued to reason, but he reasoned in vain.

Vaughan was roused late the next morning from a heavy and perturbed slumber the consequence of an over-excited mind, by Mordaunt, whose wounds had been trivial and who was now nearly recovered. "What not yet risen, and with such a golden sun burning full in at your window. Up! all the world are stirring." "Is it so late?" said Vaughan. "'Tis strange. I did not think that I had slept at all last night." "You are singularly out in your calculation then," return-

ed his friend, "for it appears that you have not only slept the night through, but made pretty tolerable inroads into the morning. I have a hundred things to say to you, and a hundred things to do besides, and not more than half time to get through them all." "What?" said Vaughan, starting up; "is there news? a march, an engagement, a pursuit?"

"Not one of the three," interrupted Mordaunt; "for once it is private business that occupies me, or, at least, nothing that materially concerns the world in general. I heard, some days since, that the regiment was ordered for India. I regretted the circumstance at the time, being not ill pleased with our style of life here; but there may be things to see and to do there as well as here; and since I have entered upon a thorough wanderer's life, I may as well support the character."

"True," said his friend, with an air of abstraction, "if the mind be at ease, it matters but little where the body may be condemned to stray." "If the mind be at ease, my dear fellow! and what is to hinder it? If the mind be at ease! was that spoken in the spirit of the camp? Why will you obscure all my glowing fancies? I was on the very tip-top of expectation, and then you come in with one of your dampers. May I forfeit estate,

commission, and my laurels in prospect, before I would have your confounded taste for reflection." "Well," replied Vaughan, "to your business."—"My business is simply this: I am off for England previously to embarking for the east. Have you any letters, memorials, presents, any Lisbon chains or Spanish rosaries. I am ready for the whole." "Letters!" said Vaughan, looking for those written on the preceding evening. Mordaunt laughed as he took from his valise a packet of formidable size; for, through delicacy to Catherine, he had enclosed the one addressed to her, together with such others as he had found it necessary to forward to England, under cover to his mother.

"I suspect you have put the regimental correspondence into my hands by mistake. Why, man, she'll never read one half of it." "Stop," said Vaughan, "you must give me back that letter," the chance which might render it expedient to despatch others of a far different order just then darting into his mind. "I would keep that letter till the last moment,—I may want to make some additions to it." "Additions! I should think that they could be scarcely necessary," examining it with an air of ludicrous minuteness. "True; but it is possible that I may not send it at all. Circumstances may change before your departure." "Hardly, I should imagine, as I leave this to-morrow." "To-mor-

row!" "Ay, at day-break." "That is unfortunate." "Unfortunate! not at all; when a thing must be done, the sooner it is done the better,—and I have a world of business on my hands. You perplex me so, that I had forgotten the most material part of my communication. I have now acted the soldier long enough for a time, and am going to try peril in a new shape. I shall beat up the convent of the Estrella in my route homewards, and resume my devoirs to my little Clara; and, if I find her as fond as you would persuade me, and more inclined to partake the wandering fortunes of the corps than remain singing vespers and nursing the old nuns, I may even go so far as to make her my wife, and then away for India. Will she stand the trial?"—"She will," said Vaughan, with emphasis; "if ever there was faith in woman, I could read it in her tears."

"Well, that affair is decided," replied Mordaunt, smiling; "you see before you 'Benedict, the married man.' Allow that I showed a dutiful deference to your opinion in the affair; though, to speak the truth, there was no great merit in following advice which perfectly agreed with my own inclinations." "Remember me to your Clara," said Vaughan. "Ay," returned his friend; "and to the vestal physiognomy of the old nun at the grating, who gave me so brilliant a character, and

libelled all mankind for my sake. The sight of me on such an errand will make a miraculous change in her opinion of the sex. By St. Ursula, she will be for eloping herself with the first handsome ruffian that falls in her way.

"Mordaunt," said Vaughan, grasping his hand, and, though incapable of entering into the gaiety of his friend, at all times was capable of rejoicing in his happiness, "I am delighted with the prospects before you; accept my sincere congratulations now, however prematurely. I may never have another opportunity of making them," and he walked to the window to conceal his emotion.

"You are a noble fellow, Vaughan," said Mordaunt, following him. "But all is not right with you this morning. To what painful and mysterious event do you allude. Show me that you think of me with the confidence of a friend and a man of honour." "I can refuse nothing thus asked," returned Vaughan; "but it must be under the seal of total secrecy, with an additional promise that you will offer no opposition to my present purposes. To be plain with you, then, I have accepted the challenge of a rash and intemperate Spaniard. The meeting is appointed for the day after to-morrow."—"It is an unlucky business," said Mordaunt;

but I do not see the affair in so serious a light as you. You will give this coxcomb his quietus. He must be a puppy, or he would never have insulted you. You will come off with flying colours." "It may be so: at all events, you see the necessity of discretion." "But one question more; you have omitted one material point, the name of the offender."

"Mordaunt, there are bounds to all communication."—"Well, then, the cause of the offence? I am curious to know what could have entangled one of your principles in such a business." "Excuse me there also; yet I could scarcely tell you,—a chance word, an opinion, a sentiment, too freely expressed. You know what nothings may be wrought into a quarrel. Jealous fool," he muttered, walking away, the Colonel's hint at that moment recurring to his mind.

Then turning suddenly to Mordaunt: "Should you be delayed a day or two, I shall leave this packet to be delivered to you. You will be particular in forwarding it to its destination." "My confounded ill-luck!" exclaimed Mordaunt. What would I not give for the next two days? But the regiment is already under orders. Our baggage has gone off; the transports are signaled off the coast." He paused. "Yet confound them all; let them go; here I stay."

"Farewell," said Vaughan firmly; "I insist on your going. That packet contains matters of the highest importance to me. It must be delivered by none but hands that I can rely on, as I do on yours. It shall be sent after you. Now, once more farewell." He turned away. Mordaunt followed him, and took his hand. "Then, if it must be so, farewell!" said he, in a tone of unusual feeling. He walked towards the door; then suddenly stopping, exclaimed: "I hope, my dear fellow, you will give that scoundrel Don a lesson that he will remember as long as he lives." He glanced a last and almost sorrowing look at Vaughan, and burst out of the room.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Oh that the busy world, at least in this,
Would take example from a wretch like me ;
None would then waste their hours in foreign thoughts,
Forget themselves, and what concerns their peace,
To tread the mazes of fantastic falsehood ;
To haunt their idle sounds, and flying tales,
Through all the noisy giddy courts of rumour !
Malicious Slander never would have leisure
To search with prying eyes for faults abroad,
If all, like me, considered their own hearts,
And wept the sorrows which they found at home.

Rever.

MORDAUNT passed through the long and crowded street where the regiments for embarkation were mustering. He was roused from his meditation by the common camp inquiry of "What news?" from a circle of his brother officers.

"None," was his brief answer. "Now, I'll lay my feather-springs to your brass barrels, Mandeville," said a brilliant ensign to one of the group, "that Mordaunt is to be the second. He has, you see, mounted a diplomatic look for the occasion."—"Aye," returned Mandeville, "the lieutenant strides away in high official style; he is clearly practising to measure the twelve paces."

"Are you actually to be Vaughan's second, Mordaunt?" said a more sedate inquirer. Mordaunt was all surprise. "Come, no admiration; the business," continued the officer. "The old Colonel, who, you know, can as little keep a secret as a shilling, in his execrations at all foreigners under the sun, let slip the whole story. Vaughan will go through the affair to the honour of his regiment; and the Spaniard will learn to behave better for the future, be that short or long."

Mordaunt here interfered. "Gentlemen, nothing more must be said upon this topic. You of course will perceive its delicacy. Mr. Vaughan's wish is——" "To be sure, and undoubtedly it is——" said an Irish Major, who had just come up— "every gentleman's wish, to send the man to the seat of his ancestors, who runs his yellow face between him and a pretty woman, let her be of whatever part or province of the wide world she may be, Cork, Cadiz, or the Cape of Good Hope." The sentiment, was received with universal applause.

"Now, Lieutenant Mordaunt," said the Major, taking him by the button, "as you are the particular friend of this young gentleman, and therefore may probably know no more about his love matters than his mother does, I will tell you the whole history. I sailed in the transport with Mr. Vaughan, and on board

were the pair of Spaniards that have raised all this disturbance: the Donna, a fine black-eyed damsel, with a mighty bewitching smile; and the Don, as solemn and stately a piece of pride as ever acted Dragon to the Golden Fruit. But before we had been half-a-dozen days on our way, the young Englishman had caught the Donna's eye and her heart besides; not at all to the liking of her magnificent he-duenna. They landed together at Lisbon; and there ends my story."

"And there begins mine," said Mandeville; "I saw their rencontre at a fête, accidental or not, it was lover-like in the first style of romance, sighs and blushes on the one part, bowing and fine speeches on the other, the interview growing rapidly more interesting, when up marched that tall handsome fellow, he who commands the Spanish grenadiers; confound his name, it is as long as himself;—ay—Don Ferdinand—I forget his dozen other Christian names; the lady drew in at once; Vaughan persisted; the Don looked fierce; and as he walked away, I read rapiers and stilettos in every stride."

The story, thus pieced of truth and falsehood, answered the purpose of satisfying the narrators as to the cause of quarrel, and at once filled Mordaunt with knowledge, and lightened his scruples at indulging the pleasure of its communication on the first opportunity.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Love pleads for me,
And Love's enough ; what argument so strong.
Absent, or present, thou art still the same ;
My faith's the same.

Lansdown.

Here, then, I take thee to my heart for ever,
Thou dear companion of my future days ;
Whatever Providence allots for each,
That be the common portion of us both.

Rose.

At an early hour on the following morning, the drum beat, and Mordaunt marched with his regiment. He endeavoured to divert his mind from dwelling on the thoughts which harassed and distressed him, by anticipating the meeting with his lovely mistress. The face of the country, now familiar, presented no object of attraction. He was discontented with every unavoidable delay. The way appeared inexpressibly tedious, and he often conceived that he must have strangely miscalculated the distance. When last he travelled the road, every spot had seemed to him replete with peculiar interest : so illusive a shade does an impatient and anxious spirit cast over the fairest face of na-

ture. The regiment, at length, at the close of some sultry days, reached Lisbon.

As its towers rose on the horizon, Mordaunt became more anxious. It must have been long since Clara could have received any tidings of him. His letters might have been lost, intercepted, scorned. The delay of an hour might prove fatal under such critical circumstances.

The convent was but a short ride from the city: it was impossible for him to sleep that night, till he was assured that all was well; and in spite of his fatigue, he set off instantly to make the inquiry.

The purple of twilight was deepening around the walls of the cloister, as he approached them with a beating and dubious heart. He wandered to and fro for a considerable period, unheard and unseen. His spirit sank at the moment of decision. The low and rich murmur of the convent organ broke upon his ear, in the stillness of the eve, and awoke him from his reverie. The darkness rapidly increased. He began to fear that all hope of attaining his object for that night, perhaps for ever, was fruitless; but he yet lingered irresolutely near the frowning gate.

He entered the convent: the decrepid form and tottering step of Ursula, the old portress, came on in the distance. He beck-

oned eagerly to her. He at length attracted her attention, and she advanced slowly towards the grating. "Who are you—whom seek you here, Senor, and at this hour?" she demanded, bending forwards, and scrutinizing his face. "Nay, Dame Ursula," said Mordaunt, impatiently, "your memory of me can scarcely have failed you altogether. My business is of the last importance, and one which admits of no delay. I must see, and speak to the lady Clara, my Clara"—"Your Clara," exclaimed the nun, lifting up her hands and eyes, in utter consternation. "It is impious to speak thus of a saint devoted to heaven."

"Woman! what do your words imply? Who has urged her to this rash step? No: you are deceiving me; I will hear the truth from her own lips. Clara, Clara!" raising his voice to a tone that made Ursula start, and look around her for help. "I dare not charge my conscience with such a commission. She is far better employed. Hence, Senor; begone! and pollute not the sacred place with unhallowed vows."—"Woman, be reasonable; take this, and do what I have bid you," interrupted he, forcing his purse into her hand. "Perplex not my conscience," said Ursula: "she for whom you inquire has long since forgotten the world. She is not to be seen by man."

At that moment a slender form, emerging from the partial obscurity, passed in the distance. "Clara, Clara!" cried Mordaunt, with a burst of exultation, "hear me—answer me." She caught the sound in an instant: "Holy Virgin! what voice is that!" she exclaimed, turning suddenly round. "May I believe my senses!" she stopped, and listened. "No; it can only be the echo of my own wild thoughts—dreams—dreams!" and pressing her hand to her forehead, she seemed endeavouring to shut out the impression of some passing vision. "It is no dream; it is Mordaunt who calls!" he exclaimed: "dearest girl! come, and be convinced." Clara sprang eagerly forwards. "Has heaven, then, heard my prayers!" As she spoke, the lamp which she held shone full upon his well-remembered features; and with a scream of recognition she let it fall from her hands; but, conscious of each other's presence, the darkness was forgotten.

Ursula, whose thoughts were more at ease, busied herself in repairing the accident, and returned hastily to her station, by no means disposed to permit a private conference. The returning light discovered the fragile form of Clara, leaning, exhausted by contending emotions, against the impenetrable grating.

Mordaunt, by an involuntary but useless

effort, extended his arms as if to support her sinking frame; then dashing them with impassioned violence against the unyielding iron, "They shall separate us no more; no earthly power shall divide you from me again. Are you prepared to follow me, Clara?"—"What do you mean?" said she, alarmed by his vehemence; "the gates will be closed in a moment; the laws of our order——"

"Heavens, what do I hear? Is it then true, that you are no longer free? are you lost to the world for ever? Then, Clara," he exclaimed, "I will not live; the world is lifeless to me. I did not think that there existed the woman who could have forced such a confession from me, but no other shall ever see me humbled."

"Stop," cried Clara, "you bewilder me; I had consented publicly to take the veil. It was long since I had seen you, or even heard from you, Senor. My mind misgave me. A week hence I was to have pronounced the irrevocable vows, the last irresolute resource of a broken heart."

"Dreadful profaneness!" said Ursula, with lifted hands and eyes. "Heavens!" replied Clara, turning, with an air of quick alarm towards her old monitor, "Have I spoken evil?"

"Do not mind her," interrupted Mordaunt,

"but listen to me; time wears, and I have much to say; our regiment is under orders for India; my share in the present campaign is at an end, and my stay in your country is but for a moment."

"India!" exclaimed Clara, with almost a shriek of anguish, "then my doom is sealed—farewell for ever."—"Does the distance alarm you thus," cried Mordaunt, willing to try her yet further. "No," said Clara, painfully, "it is not the distance that appals me—of that I am ill calculated to judge. It is the thought of all that I have heard of the habits of that country, all that I have been told of its luxury, its splendour, where none escape the contagion; how then can she hope a place in your remembrance, who has nothing but affection to offer."

"But, Clara, it depends upon you whether I shall run that danger. One word for all, will you partake a soldier's fortunes?"—"What can I reply!" said Clara, tremblingly—"I know no studied language. With no adviser, no guide but these disturbed feelings. May I not fear that they will mislead me?"

"Come away, child," interrupted Ursula, grasping her robe with her withered hand. Mordaunt drew out a handful of piastres, which glittered temptingly in the light of the lamp. Ursula relaxed her hold. "The

saints preserve me," said Ursula; "what persevering people these English heretics are. Lady Clara, the gates are going to be shut." Mordaunt dropped the piastres in her pocket as she turned away. "I must now leave you," said Clara; and then in a low yet firm tone, "Mordaunt, you remembered me in distress and in danger. You preferred me to those children of the world who possess more dazzling qualities. I will not injure a faith so strongly tried by a second suspicion; and what better proof of my confidence can I give, than that which you demand. Go where you will, I will follow; in the sight of our holy altars, in the sight of that altar holier still, the starry heaven above us, I am your's and your's for ever!"

"Then to-morrow, my Clara," cried the exulting Mordaunt, "to-morrow I will return to claim the fulfilment of your promise.—To-morrow you shall exchange your sables for white. You shall make no vows, but such as I may listen to.—You shall quit this prison for the world." The convent bell tolled. "Farewell, till to-morrow."—"Adieu," said Clara, wiping a joyous tear from her cheek. Mordaunt pressed her hand, and was gone.

Not to wander too long from scenes and characters more essential to the develop-

ment of our tale, suffice it to say, that, every obstacle overcome, at an early hour on the following morning, at the altar of her convent, Mordaunt received the hand of his young bride; and in three days more they had embarked for England.

The effect of a sensitive and animated spirit opening in its full vigour upon scenes and objects scarcely within the comprehension of its hitherto limited view, was a high source of novelty and interest to Mordaunt. Were a child gifted with the power of expressing with clearness its perception of every sight of wonder that first met its gaze, the effect produced might be something similar. Every feature of Clara's expressive countenance was in perpetual play. The minuteness and singularity of her inquiries, the expression of surprise and admiration with which she surveyed the new world of life, were strongly contrasted with the apathy and indifference with which they were regarded by the multitude around her.

"What is this sensation that overpowers me," she exclaimed to Mordaunt, "these feelings to which I can scarcely give a name? Is it that happiness is more difficult to bear than grief? I am like the blind to whom sight has been suddenly given. Every object teems with wonder and delight. Surely the God of Nature could never have

formed so fair a world to condemn his creatures to abandon it altogether. They judged wrong who would teach religion by a life of solitude and gloom. It is only the light and joyous heart that beats with the true pulse of gratitude towards the Giver of all this glorious variety of good."—"Your remarks have opened a new speculation to me," returned Mordaunt, smiling. "When the glow of life has deserted me, and this world begins to pall, I will most assuredly turn monk for a period, shut out the earth, and then bursting from my shell, like a chrysalis spread my wings to summer and sunshine. I have somewhere read of an Eastern monarch who offered half his kingdom to the man who should light upon an unknown pleasure. Had this worthy sultan lived in my time, inspired with this happy idea, I should without doubt present myself at his palace gate, and claim the recompense." "Perhaps I do wrong," said Clara, timidly, almost afraid of his raillery, "to expatiate upon feelings in which your higher understanding cannot be supposed to share. I will henceforth check my astonishment. Our delights should be in common, and yet may I not enjoy these wonders, since it is to you that I owe them all." And sinking her head upon his shoulder, the grateful and lovely girl gave vent to her heart in tears of joy.

CHAPTER XXIX.

He's cautious, Sir, he's subtle, he's a courtier,
 * * * * * He's a summer insect,
 And loves the sunshine. On his gilded wings
 While the scales waver, he'll fly doubtful round you
 And sing his flatteries to all alike;
 The scales once fixed, he'll settle on the winner,
 And swear his prayers bring down the victory.

Young.

CATHERINE GREVILLE, ever since Vaughan's departure, had remained the guest, or rather, the inmate of his mother's house; far from sighing after the gay society to which she had been accustomed, as Mrs. Vaughan had been inclined to fear, she seemed peculiarly disposed to relish the quiet and rational mode of life adopted by her friend. She besides enjoyed the secret satisfaction of being secure of receiving the first intelligence of Vaughan's safety.

Mrs. Courtney, rejoiced at being thus freed from the charge of one on whom she had so long looked with a jealous eye, had made not the slightest overture towards receiving her again. She had written once or twice, at stated intervals, to her "most valued sister-in-law," and her "dearest niece."

Her letters were the perfection of adroit coldness, and they were always read by Catherine with indifference, and thrown by with contempt. Julia, with whom her mother had never been prevailed upon to hold any communication from the hour of her marriage, and who had lived in great retirement and dejection since her husband's departure, having no resource in her tenderness, had taken up her abode near her aunt and cousin. Lady Lovemore whirling in a round of brilliant dissipation, had never troubled herself with recollecting her existence. Fashion was her goddess, and the fashionable alone could lay claim to her patrician notice. "Julia had not married as she might have done—they would probably never cross each other's path again."

Philip, whose policy was of a deeper and more subtle nature than that of the various members of his worldly family, had alone continued to keep up a casual and even civil intercourse with the neglected Catherine. He had more than once, in his rambles through the country, found his way to Mrs. Vaughan's cottage, and had even condescended to become her guest for two or three days at a time. His idle and extravagant habits had now almost estranged him from his professional pursuits, and all his hope rested upon the fortunate result of one

or other of two favourite speculations, his succession to his uncle's ample fortune, or, in the event of ill luck there, an opulent marriage.

Of the former, he had of late begun to entertain less sanguine expectations. Vaughan's absence, far from abating, had appeared to increase, the old man's interest in his welfare. All from whom he was likely to glean the slightest information concerning him, were earnestly questioned. His letters were anxiously expected, and read with avidity; and the decisive step which had been taken, in the second purchase of the commission, was an alarming stretch of liberality totally at variance with his uncle's character.

A strong doubt respecting Colonel Greville's death, too, had more than once crossed his mind. No certain intelligence of the event had reached his family. A little civility towards his daughter might still be prudent, and could be productive of no harm. He had lately twice in two successive months found his way to Mrs. Vaughan's retreat, and extended his visit each time to the unusual length of an entire week. His attentions to Catherine had even grown so distinct as to excite Mrs. Vaughan's surprise, and Catherine's contemptuous remark, that, "from her early experience, Philip's conduct, how-

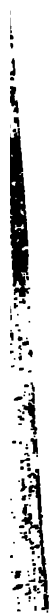
ever unaccountable it might seem at the time, had always a motive, and that motive, self."

Ignorant of those yet darker shades in his character, which had come out in the intercourse with her son; while she dreaded his acquiring any undue influence over Catherine's mind, she could not at the same time shut her doors against the nephew of her husband. The only person who had any acquaintance with the pecuniary transaction was Catherine; and Vaughan, before his departure, had extorted from her a reluctant promise of secrecy on the subject, a promise which she had often since repented.

END OF VOL. I.

W. G. 17
MS

100



NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

book is under no circumstances to be

taken from the Building

[illegible]



—

